The Dissertation Committee for Junaid Akram Rana certifies that this is the approved version of the following dissertation:

Traffic in the Diaspora: Pakistan, Modernity and Labor Migration

Committee:

Kamala Visweswaran, Supervisor

James Brow

Edmund T. Gordon

Kamran Ali

Raza Mir

Traffic in the Diaspora: Pakistan, Modernity and Labor Migration

Junaid Akram Rana (B.A., M.A.)

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Traffic in the Diaspora: Pakistan, Modernity and Labor Migration

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This dissertation is an ethnography of transnationalism in recent working-class migration from Pakistan. Using multi-sited research, I track the state-subject relationship present in the process of transnational migration. This study focuses on Pakistan as a sending country and examines the movement of its labor diasporas. The Middle East, Europe and North America (primarily the United States) are the main sites of destination for the transnational labor investigated. Since the 1970s transnational labor migration has created significant economic and cultural changes in Pakistan. To understand these changes I conducted ethnographic research of the migration industry primarily in Lahore and the province of Punjab, Pakistan. This research centered on migrant narratives, the formation of transnational subjectivities and the role of the state in transnational migration.

The experience of working class labor migration is structured by the labor-capital relationship. The state mediates this process through material controls and the discursive conception of a citizen-subject. In Pakistan, the particular modernity present between the state and transnational labor migration manifests itself in the formation of migrant

subjectivity. This subjectivity is shaped through secular and religious categories that frame transnational conceptions of class and race.

Chapter One, explores the place of the secular in the experience of modernity and Islam. This is important in situating the place of labor migrant narratives and the possibilities of secular and religious imaginaries. Chapter Two sets the stage for the ethnographic work of this dissertation through an examination of development literature in South Asia as it relates to labor history and labor migration. Chapter Three is an extensive ethnography of the system of the migration industry as it produces labor migrations and an exploration of the racial and class implications of these labor flows. Chapter Four begins an ethnographic study of the state through the issue of subject formation and the concept of the production of legality and illegality. Chapter Five explores the role of moral panics and racism as forms of representations of labor and migrants. Chapter Six explores two narratives of transnational labor migration, one secular and the other religious, in contemplating the use of utopias in labor migrant imaginaries.

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Introduction: Traffic in the Diaspora: Pakistan, Modernity and Labor Migration

During my fieldwork in Lahore, Pakistan, in early 2001 a political activist asked me what I thought of the word globalization. I laughed and replied that this word was used for everything these days. He agreed noting that there were so many definitions that the word had become meaningless. But as we talked we begin deciphering two general groupings of these definitions based in connecting globalization with the opposing frameworks of neoliberalism and imperialism. In this first sense globalization stands for economic and political liberalization. In this meaning, globalization is defined by the possibilities of market capitalism and the expansion of multinational capital. Hand in hand with this idea of capitalism is a conception of democracy and the freedoms such practices create. From this point of view, social science, primarily through the policy making of economists, works at the behest of the state and international institutions to craft controlled, carefully constructed, models in the calculation of how to improve the lives of individuals and populations. This conceptualization of market reform is at the heart of the neoliberal thinking. In this approach, economic development is based in a philosophy of efficiency and the creation of a competitive global market of exchange. Social change and economic development are then dependent on the ability of a society to adapt to global competition. But this is not just a societal issue, for such a model of globalization places faith in the

transformative possibilities of individualism. As a maxim of neoliberalism, the individual is the subject from which the change of societies and populations takes place.

In contrast to this approach, globalization is increasingly viewed in the context of a newly configured imperialism and the domination of so-called developing countries of the South by the developed countries of the North.[1] In this scheme imperialism has transformed from the overt exploitation of the colonial model to the indirect control of international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. But as many observers have noted, such institutions are primarily guided by the foreign policy interests of the US government. Such a relationship between state and transstate institutions speaks to the complexity of the concept of the state. Indeed, the dominance of the US is obvious in the recent pattern of interventions abroad through military force and economic sanction in the Middle East. These acts of control at a global level demonstrate the relevance of how this overt use of power mirrors the colonial model. Wars on terrorism are wars of American empire.[2] The idea of a global market of exchange is then understood as the imposition of global relations of unequal power. Such power relations benefit imperial countries in their economic and political dominance of subordinate countries. This notion of empire replicates the capitalist mode of production of colonial models but differs in how the exploitation of capital is extracted. In other words, globalization in this analysis has become the euphemism for maintaining imperial relations of power on a world scale.

[1] Increasingly this dominance is defined by the hegemony of US imperialism.
[2] For example, writers such as Micheal Ignatieff (2003) have argued for a 'responsible' American imperialism in US military interventions.

In either sense, globalization has its aims firmly in the efficient and rapid spread of capitalism. This modality of globalization as accelerated capitalism has rightly been called late capitalism following Marxist analysis of the history of capital (Jameson 1991; Mandel 1978). In this conception, the efficiency and rapid growth of the capitalist economic system is marked by the advancement of a capitalism that organizes a global order. That is to say that the spread of global capitalism is achieved through the historic movement of capital and its universalizing logic. Multiple forms of capitalism are then encapsulated by the logic of a single dominant capitalist mode of production. The state in this era of late capitalism seeks to manage the accumulation of capital in a form referred to as state monopoly capitalism (Jessop 1982, 1990; Poulantzas 1968, 1978). This stage of the control of capital by the state is tied to the universalizing impulse of capitalist modernity in which all economic systems must be unified under a single global economy. This is achieved through the exertion of imperialist power and the creation of an economic empire. As an economic system, capitalism seeks to organize all aspects of social and cultural life. The states role is to then organize this system of capitalism through the tactics, strategies and rationality of a neoliberal governmentality (Ferguson and Gupta 2002; Foucault 1991).

As capital crosses borders in its global spread, labor also becomes transnational. The state as it seeks economic capital, also seeks to control and manage its labor supply. In this sense, to fit the needs of the state, domestic labor supplies become transnational in the complex patterns of capitalism and the global market. This dissertation explores the state production of transnational labor migration and the systems of subject formation

that are a consequence of this relationship. The ethnographic component of this research was conducted primarily in Pakistan in an examination of its labor diaspora. In my research I found that migration to multiple points in the diaspora in the search for work creates a complex process of state mediation and subject formation. The interaction between the state and labor migrants has resulted in a shift in the patterns of migration and the ways in which workers make sense of themselves within global migrations.

In terms of globalization, labor migration has become a central component of the capitalist system. As I argue, the role of the state has much to do with the shape of these transnational migrations. These flows increasingly follow a pattern of multiple migration circuits in which transnational labor migrants find access to work and the accumulation of forms of capital. This process is in large part mediated by the state and state-like institutions. In terms of the theory of the state, I argue that the state concept is complex and multi-faceted. This is to say that the state is not an integral, absolute concept. Rather, the state is fractured under the neoliberal model in which non-state institutions produce state effects alongside those of the state. Thus, the effect of the state can be found in multiple arenas without direct state intervention. Such a relationship is created through the state reproduction of itself as an ideological state apparatus that maintains a compacted notion of a complete and powerful state. As Timothy Mitchell observes, the state produces its effects in multiple fields through its reified and disembodied appearance through state and non-state actors (1991).

Hence, in this ethnography I explore how the concept of the state is produced as other institutions reproduce state effects. On the one hand, in the case of the Pakistani

state, are international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the IMF that provide a template for market reform. On the other are corporations in the private sphere responsible for contracting transnational labor that was once the domain of the state in the public sphere. The state seeks to balance these spheres of international and private interests while reproducing them as its own. This multiplicity of state effects mediates the process of transnational labor migration by controlling such populations and creating a system from which multiple migration circuits take place. As I argue, these migration circuits are mutually constitutive of a system of subject formation of diasporic consciousness through the social categories of identity formation.

Multiple Migration Circuits

Conceptualized as a transnational labor history, this research investigates the contemporary routes of migration flows from Pakistan and the role the state plays in producing such flows. Contemporary migrations to locations in the Middle East, Europe and North America are explored as patterns of several migration circuits. In Roger Rouse's research into migrations between Mexico and the United States, he dubbed the fluid pattern of movement between the two countries a migration circuit (1991, 1995). In my research I examine this pattern of a migration circuit in terms of step migration, and the gradual formation of a migration circuit between countries that include the movements to and from multiple regions. For many Pakistani migrants the goal is to reach the United States. As such the US functions as an important figure in the

imaginaries of diasporic consciousness. To make it to this destination can involve the navigation of several locations in accumulated migrations as opportunities make themselves available. In this study the pattern of radial migration from one location to another is expanded to a model that conceives of migration as transitory and configured in multiple migration circuits. One-way migrations from home to host countries are transformed into a complex pattern of multiple migrations. This process is partially managed and organized by the state in Pakistan that includes its own public responsibilities, as well as the private sphere of contracting companies and the various actors that participate in the migration process referred to as the migration industry. Hence a key site of this ethnography is the examination of the processes and conditions of how the state of Pakistan regulates migration flows through the migration industry.

This project was sparked by an interest in certain research questions that revolved around transnational migrants that seek capital abroad. What is it that drives labor migrants from their homelands? How is it that economic migration affects the social and cultural understandings of the world? How is the desire for economic gain cultivated through social and cultural mechanisms? How do the discourses of the global economy relate to transnational migrants? How do global relations of power manifest themselves in the relationships of everyday practice? For labor migration this follows the familiar relationship of capital to labor as it is controlled by the state. The place of the state in relationship to labor migration is such that as it mediates the processes of globalization it creates particular formations from which experiences of subjectivity emerge. Hence the state as an integral component of how migration is produced and patterned.

To explore such a proposition, I examine the role of the state in the history of how migration is socially produced by formal and informal means. It is frequently assumed that the option to migrate is an individual choice, but how might this choice be influenced by social, economic and political factors, and how is this knowledge circulated? For example a large flow of labor migration to the Middle East during the 1990s dramatically decreased due to the Gulf War and the saturation of the Middle East labor market. Even though the labor demands of the Middle East have since resumed, labor migrants shifted attention to other markets for their labor.

Hence, as an example of the movement of labor and capital, how might one understand the political economy of oil and its distribution next to and against the labor migrations of South Asians to the Middle East? What is the relationship of such commodities to the growth of transnational migrations, and how do such economies produce and pattern such migrations? The political economy of the state and the exchange of commodities certainly shape the demands for the supply of labor in particular ways. As I discuss in Chapter 2 and 4, transnational labor migration from South Asia has much to do with shifts in the role of the state and the influx of petrodollars into the Middle East. For Gulf Countries this increased cash flow resulted in massive construction projects and the need for transnational migrants to provide their labor. For South Asian countries sending workers to the Gulf, this was an enormous boon to domestic economies. The significance of which, for a country in dire economic straits like Pakistan, was of significant political and social impact. For the labor migrants themselves, access to travel, work and wages, created new social relationships in terms of

economic and cultural changes stemming from the dynamic process of migration. In Pakistan, migration became a popularly conceived motif in the 1980s and 1990s with references in the media to the 'Dubai chalo' working-class migrants and the 'Amrikan' overseas Pakistani.[3] Labor migrants from Pakistan were not only going to the Gulf and the US, indeed Pakistanis were finding their way to places all over the globe in search for work, education and opportunity.

The study of globalization presents new challenges to the study of ethnography in terms of tracking such transnational migrations. In pursuing the question of how labor migrations are linked to globalization, this dissertation explores the transnationalism of recent working-class migration from Pakistan. The aim is to trace some of the ways in which labor diasporas are placed within the global economy through state regulation. As such this is an ethnography of capitalism and globalization that elaborates the Pakistani experience of how South Asian migrations relate to the concepts of class formation, Muslim identity, and modernity. The importance of seeing this research as regional and comparative is crucial to the experience of labor migration. Pakistani migrations share many parallels with other South Asian countries. Indeed, many in working-class migrations find themselves in categories that essentialize their social identity when working abroad. This is partially a result of the process of framing 'labor' and 'worker' as class categories, but also to racialized and gendered discourses of identity. This is to

[3] 'Dubai chalo' translates as 'Let's go to Dubai', a popular reference to the largely working-class migration to Gulf countries from the 1970s and its peak in the 1980s. Although these movements continue, popular references in the 1990s and currently are more frequently made to the professional class overseas Pakistanis. This group spans the globe, as much as the working-classes, with the US figured as the ideal destination. 'Amrikan' is then 'American.' This relationship is long standing with implications in US-Pakistan relations. For a parody see Sadat Hasan Manto's *Letters to Uncle Sam* (2001).

say that class position in a society is based on the kind of work one does and the access to capital. In this sense class can be comparatively analyzed in terms of societal conceptions of work and the value attributed to such labor. Class is indeed a cultural construct that must be understood through its intersections with other social categories of analysis. Thus, transnational labor migrations from Pakistan have their own particular histories that must be placed in the larger framework of regional and global patterns of labor migration.

Labor and Capital, Diaspora and the Nation-State

In recent years the growth of diaspora and transnational research has led to important theoretical insights. Specifically, such research goes beyond the traditional area studies approach toward accounting for the fluidity and flexibility of the migration experience. This project continues this critical approach of diaspora studies and the exploration of the nation-state. In the experience of diaspora, the state frames the nation as a transnation. Thus the categories of nation formation are linked in important ways to the interventions of the state and the framing of the diaspora. This work explores the issue of identity formation explicitly in terms of the concepts of class and race and their relationship to diaspora and transnationalism.

As an overarching question in terms of cultural diasporas, this research considers the role of religion, specifically Islam, in the concepts of diaspora, migration and modernity. It asks what the role of religion is in diaspora theory in the example of Muslims and diasporas and how such a conceptualization changes the approach to the

study of globalization. Further, in the understanding of migration to globalization, I argue for the importance of connecting theories of modernity to understand the complexity of the migration experience. Modernity is a central framing theory of globalization. It is the modernity-modernization pairing of new and old discourses of development that creates economic, political and social relationships between nation-states, and hence the transnational migrant through the navigation of these systems of states and migration. As I argue, modernity is not just a condition, but an uneven process that must be understood in terms of many alternative modernities (Chapter 1). The state in this process constructs subjects through multiple understandings of subject position. Hence the economic subject, the legal subject, the religious subject, the racial subject, etc., are crafted in relationship to the state as one autonomous subject.

Following the arguments of Gilroy (1993) and Robinson (1983) in terms of the specific migrations of enslaved Africans to the Americas as pivotal to the formation of Western capitalism and modernity, I argue that transnational labor migrants from Pakistan are involved in the creation of a similar formation. Gilroy argues for a counter-modernity called the black Atlantic (4, 1993) that was created out of the fraught relationship of slavery to capitalism. The black Atlantic acts as an oppositional discourse of modernity that is in contrast to the dominant universalist modernity of Europe and America. Rather than a counter-modernity in this sense, I argue in terms of an alternative modernity that has been crafted in the Muslim world through the concept of Islamic modernity. In this experience of modernity the neoliberal state arbitrates secular and religious categories. This is a framework from which Muslim labor migrants from

Pakistan participate in cultural systems of subject formation. These social networks of affiliation, and disaffiliation, are organized through the metaphor of the *umma*, or the Islamic community. From this perspective, multiple formations of pan-Islamic linkages emerge according to various hierarchies of social and cultural identity. Further, I argue that discourses within Islamic modernities are framed in terms of religious and secular narratives as part of this particular formation that are then authorized by state processes of encompassment. This is to say that transnational practices of social organization are then located in the national consciousness through the mediation of the state. For transnational labor migrants this results in a complex formation of diasporic consciousness or subjectivity.

The key aspects of social identity that I examine in this study are class, race and religion, in terms of constructing notions of diaspora. Aihwa Ong has argued that the cultural politics of identity be understood in terms of cultural struggle (1991). As Ong argues, cultural struggle does not discount the potentialities of understanding the particular formations of transnational migrations (1999). In Pakistan the largest flows of migration are male and working-class. Hence an important component of identity formation in Pakistan is found in the dynamics of working-class populations and the masculine experience of transnationalism. This masculinity is complicated in the experience of migration in which the family must be refigured to maintain a patriarchal order. The social effects of class, race and religion are intimately connected to these newly configured patriarchies. These categories have differential meanings in various sites of the diaspora and as such specific migration circuits have particular effects on

subject formation. Hence the dynamic of structure and agency in identity formation is complex, shifting and contingent. But this is not to say that subject formation is only in flux, for it is configured through static conceptions at particular moments through regimes that manage relations of power. For transnational labor migrants such formations have particular discursive and material meaning to their subjugated positions.

In this research I have actively sought to understand working-class migrations from Pakistan, as opposed to professional migrations. Although working-class migrants of Pakistan have received some scholarly attention, the focus generally of research on transnational migrations from South Asia tends to focus on the professional classes. In the case of Pakistan, one reason for this is an academic liberalism that seeks solutions from the transnational elite. Working-class migrations are proportionately much larger than the professionals, but it is the hope of large scale investment by the diasporic elite that raises such attention and focus. Indeed, the problem of gaining a high rate of foreign direct investment has plagued the Pakistani state for many decades. While remittances from working-class migrants have kept the economy afloat in cash and the circulation of goods, the development of industry through capital growth and foreign capital investment has stumbled. The Pakistani government in this circumstance has attempted to target wealthy transnationals for investment to little effect.

The focus of working-class migrations from Pakistan has a particular history that emerges out of the crisis of the Pakistani state in the 1970s. The organization of domestic labor unions in Pakistan was effectively crushed by the late 1970s under the Bhutto regime, a pattern that originates in the 1950s. The failure of organized labor to gain

adequate protections from domestic trade union laws played an important role in the flight of laboring classes toward transnational sites. Indeed, in the 1970s as domestic labor unions were weakened, Pakistan saw an enormous growth in transnational migration to the Gulf and Northern regions such as Europe and North America.

By exploring how working-class migrants from Pakistan negotiate transnationalism, I track how this migration is simultaneously produced and patterned in the global economic system. The production of migration as I argue must be read through an analysis of the political economy of globalization. Similarly the patterns of migration that emerge from labor diasporas from Pakistan are historically grounded in the economic, social and political relationships of globalization. Hence the choice to migrate is framed within structures that provide this possibility in the first place. In other words the shape of the global economy produces the need for labor in certain forms and at certain times. The production of the migration process then follows certain patterns that depend on social and cultural networks. Thus the choice for someone to migrate from a rural village in Pakistan to Dubai or New York, for example, does not emerge out of thin air. It follows a distinct pattern that is dependant on a number of factors. For one, the process of migration is always dependent on other people. That is, someone always knows someone else in a system of social networks that aid in the migration process. But for the option as such to exist in the first place, has to do with the broader issues of the political economy of globalization and the location of the state in this process. The production of migration and its patterning is both global and local. The political economy

of globalization that creates these migrations is also formative in constituting the life-worlds and subjectivities of migrant laborers.

A critical approach to the study of race and its relationship to religion is also a necessary component of this analysis. Following the various Asian American works that critically engage the idea of race (e.g. Lowe 1996; Okihiro 1994; Prashad 2000, 2001), this research applies this approach to the transnational significance of race. For Muslim diasporas, race is constituted through religion in a logic particular to Western modernity (Al-Azmeh 1993, Miles 1989). By constructing Islam as Europe's Other, racial thinking transmutes biological phenotype into cultural categories such as religion. At this historical conjuncture, the analysis of these categories has become of paramount importance. Central to this argument are the effects of the categories of race and religion in the system of multiple migration circuits. These effects are found in popular discourses that are importantly mediated by the state (Chapter 5). Hence, how race is understood as a differential experience in the various nodes of the migration circuits. For example the hierarchies of class and race in the Middle East differ from their usage in Europe and North America. These multiple experiences are constituted in a differential diasporic consciousness and subjectivity (Chapters 3 and 6).

The multiple social, economic, and political relationships created through the migration process are then formative of migrant life-worlds. To understand the lived experiences of labor migrants, the concept of diasporic imaginaries is deployed in relation to migrant subjectivity. Through the negotiation of transnationalism, labor migrants actively construct diasporic imaginaries that are framed by state control and

social categories of identity such as nation, class, race, religion and gender. The concept of the imaginary opens up the possibility of understanding the many ways in which life-worlds are constructed. Life-worlds, as Marx referred to them, are constructed in and through the connection of the economic to the social and cultural. These relationships are reflected in everyday practice and in a critical discourse of the world. Hence for labor migrants, the act of migration is a formative experience that shapes subjectivity. Imaginaries within these life-worlds tell us much about labor migrant subjectivity in terms of how social being is created and understood.

Diasporic imaginaries in these migration circuits are crucial to the navigation of the migration process. Through structures that shape diasporic imaginaries and the agency of migrant subjectivity these identities are formed. Labor migrant existence is at once formulated in terms of the state, as subjects within the state system. For transnational migrants the state is a key component to the formation of social and cultural identities in terms of the legal construction of migrants and citizens (Chapter 4). These discursive controls have their material effects in controlling patterns of migration and creating migrant subjectivities. Agency in this experience is manipulated through the state and also outside of it, that is, through structures that claim to be outside of the state. In the examples I give of Pakistani labor migrants, this kind of possibility is found in the transnationalism of certain Islamic religious groups and the mobilization for transnational workers' rights. Both argue through and against the state in that they seek elements of social justice not offered by the state. Within this emerging diasporic public sphere of labor migrants, identity is structured around several key concepts such as race, class and

gender (Chapter 5). For Pakistani labor migrants, I argue that religion is also an important organizing principle of identity and the experience of migration. Indeed, in terms of identity, many transnational workers understand themselves through the context of religion and the discourses of cultural and social categories (Chapter 6).

Following recent anthropological work this study pursues the social and cultural components of capital as they relate to its economic form to understand the complex of the labor-capital relationship. Pierre Bourdieu's work has consistently grappled with the many forms of capital including economic, social, cultural, educational, symbolic etc (1977, 1993, 1998). Bourdieu relies on Marx's outlining of economic capital,[4] but his intervention focuses on the multiple forms of capital in social and cultural life and their conversion within society. How forms of capital gain value in fields of power is an important part of his analysis. As he states: "In every epoch there is a constant struggle over the rate of exchange between the different kinds of capital, a struggle among the different fractions of the dominant class, whose overall capital is composed in differing proportions of the various kinds of capital" (Bourdieu 1993, 34). This is to say that capital is constantly changing in value depending on the relationship to power, conceived here in the sense of access and privilege[5] (Bourdieu 1998). Bourdieu's model of capital relies on the idea of economic capital as it moves through markets and finds its value in commodities. The model of economic capital of Marx is the metaphor for understanding the real and imagined social relationships established in fields of power and exchanged as various forms of capital. The meanings of these forms of capital are to be found in the

[4] See Marx *Capital, Vol. 1* (1967[1867]) and Althusser's *Reading Capital*(1979).

everyday. For example, social capital can be seen in one configuration as simply connections and networks of influence, whereas symbolic capital can be viewed through the ideas of status and prestige. This combines the ideas of Marx and Weber to understand the relationships that make social class and give it their meaning. Anthropologists have used these insights in terms of thinking through the effects of capital and daily life and the production of forms of neoliberal capitalisms. This analysis is useful in thinking or the various ways in which capitalism operates in social life, and through the nation-state.[6]

Other recent anthropological work has also influenced this study of transnationalism by broadening the understanding of global economies to social life (Appadurai 1996; Basch, Schiller and Blanc 1994; Clifford 1997; Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc 1992; Rouse 1991; Smith and Guarnizo 1998). Following the effects of capital illuminates how labor migrants fare in dual labor markets. Certainly, labor migrants are an important part of the competition embedded in the global marketplace. But the flexibility with which this process has taken place requires greater scrutiny. Thus, using ethnographic examples to understand the dynamic of labor and capital, this work examines how the state shapes transnational migration under structures of capitalism.[7]

The literature on labor migration from Pakistan has covered issues concerning development, poverty, return migration, remittances and has mainly focused on migration to the Middle East (Addleton 1992; Amjad 1989; Arif and Irfan 1997; Azam 1995; Gilani

[5] In this sense, Bourdieu thinks of capital and class in terms of Weber's notion of status, see Weber (1946).
[6] For example the Comaroff's work on capitalism (Comaroff and Comaroff 1991; 1997; 2000) and Aihwa Ong's work on cultural and flexible citizenship (Ong 1996, 1999; Ong and Nonini 1997).

1985; Levebvre 1999). The anthropological literature on migration from Pakistan has made important contributions to understanding the social change in household structures, accumulation and development (Lefebvre 1999, Werbner 1990). This project contributes to this body of literature by focusing on the relatively untouched subject of labor migration to the US from the perspective of Pakistan. In so doing it invokes the use of imaginaries to place the US as a site of diasporic destination. Also, this research furthers the knowledge of the transnational experience of migration both in a sending country and a receiving country. On the US side, this investigation will add to the growing literature in South Asian American studies through its emphasis on diaspora and transnationalism.[8] Migration, like trade, is one aspect under the management of the state that is both national and international. As an ethnography of the state this work seeks to establish the ways in which the modern postcolonial state controls flows of transnational labor.

Methodology

To elaborate the theoretical concerns of this project I conducted an ethnography of the migration industry in Pakistan. This includes state-controlled emigration, labor brokers/ promoters, migrant trafficking, and the formation of transnational communities. The role of the Pakistani state in the control of migration flows is only a small proportion of actual

[7] See for example the valuable work of Sassen (1988) on the relationship of labor and capital to such things as foreign direct investment and remittances. For the application of this to South Asia see Bagchi (1999).
[8] See for example Jensen 1988; Khadelwal 2002; Kumar 2000; Leonard 1992; Lessinger 1996; Prashad 2000; Shankar and Srikanth 1999; Shukla 2003, as well as the related works in Asian American Studies such as Cheng and Bonacich 1984; Hu-DeHart 1999; Lowe 1996; Kwong 1997; Okihiro 1994; Ong, Bonacich, and Cheng 1994.

migration. This is due to the many routes of migration that are not tracked by the state apparatus. However, the study of the state reveals insights into the legal construction of the migration process. Further, the legal production of migrants is integrally related to their illegalization and the role the state has in this process. And although the state directly controls a small proportion of transnational migration, its reach is substantial in the ideological construction of juridico-legal subjects that are beholden to the state system.

Much of this research involved documenting the contracting system for labor migrants. Brokers and promoters function as independent subcontractors to various state actors. The process of contracting, once exclusively the domain of the state, is increasingly a decentralized private relationship between contractors and employers. This relationship raises various questions for the role of international law and workers rights. By comparing the historical relationship of different periods of international migration and labor this exploration of the contracting system adds a comparative component to the ethnographic analysis. For example, contracting systems have been in use in the South Asian diaspora from early colonial times to present. Hence, one thread of this research examines how the current conditions of contracting in a postcolonial country compare to those of prior migratory movement to the Caribbean and Africa during the colonial era and early movement to Europe and the United States (Chapter 3).[9]

This ethnographic research on the contracting system of Pakistan involved in the employment of labor migrants examines the role of the state in controlling the nation as a

migratory subject and hence a trans-nation. The population of transnational migrants is partially controlled by the state and increasingly by subcontractors in the private domain. As such these brokers and promoters of the migration industry operate under the supervision of the state. The importance of this site is that it provides work abroad for all migrant subgroups from professional to unskilled, rural to urban.[10] As such this system offers insight into the experiences of migrants of a diverse background. Interviews and oral histories with labor migrants were conducted in addition to the gathering of official. Government officials were interviewed and quantitative data was collected from various government offices and independent institutions. In keeping with ethnographic practice, all interviewees were given pseudonyms unless they were public interviews with state officials.

Moreover this project examines the multiple migration circuit from Pakistan to the United States. As a receiving country, the US is a final destination for many migrants who have previous contact with other points in the Pakistani diaspora in a pattern of step migration. This includes places as diverse as the Middle East, Europe and Africa. By mapping how this migratory process currently occurs my concern is to compile the cultural knowledge gained in the multiple migrations that form a diasporic circuit between Pakistan and the US. In this regard I examine the motivations and conditions under which migration takes place. Certainly much of the movement between Pakistan and the US is direct. However for many labor migrants who do not have direct access,

[9] Among others see Ramdin (2000) on the Caribbean; Gregory (1971) on Africa; Anwar (1979) for the UK; Cheng and Bonacich (1984) and Jenson (1988) for the US. See also Tinker (1974, 1977) for a general overview of South Asian migration.
[10] For a report on the relationship of contract labor to labor migration see Vijay Prashad (1994).

they resort to alternative means to migrate to the US. These methods have become part and parcel of the global migration industry. By exploring the migration industry, I map the routes in which migrants pursue greater access to resources.

Data collection consisted of two levels. First, the general national and regional demographics of migration, and second the specific transnational experiences of migrants. Documents concerning official statistics and records were collected from various state and international agencies. State agencies included mainly sub-agencies of the Ministry of Labor such as the Bureau of Emigration and the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation. Controlling the flows of undocumented migrants is mainly the jurisdiction of the Federal Investigative Agency. Information from the National Archives in Islamabad, Pakistan, were also obtained. Interviews with various officials within the state system of controlling migration were conducted. Information and interviews were also conducted with international agencies in their offices in Islamabad including the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the International Labor Organization. I also interviewed former employees of these organizations mainly the World Bank.

According to the Government of Pakistan, Punjab has the highest number of labor migrants and private contracting companies. I conducting most of my ethnographic research in the city of Lahore, a regional protectorate of the Punjab where most of the promoters/contractors are located. The official figures for labor migration provide an important insight into both formal and informal migration yet the depth of the actual migration occurring between Pakistan and the US is uncertain (see Azam 1995 on Pakistani migration). Interviews of transnational migrants were conducted mainly in

Islamabad and Lahore. Lahore was the main site of ethnographic investigation into the particular locations and experiences of the migration industry. Interviews were also conducted in other parts of the province of Punjab including Gujranwala, Raiwind, Faisalabad and several small villages outside of these locations. In this sense much of my research relies on the obvious shift in rural to urban migration in the mobility toward transnational locations. Research in Pakistan was conducted during the summers of 1998 and 1999 and from October 2000 to July of 2001.

Summary

Chapter One, following the work of Edward Said questions the place of secular criticism in the experience of modernity and Islam. This is important to situate the place of labor migrant narratives in secular and religious imaginaries. Chapter Two sets the stage for the ethnographic work of this dissertation through an examination of the development literature in South Asia as it relates to labor history and labor migration. Using the work of Gunnar Myrdal to understand the place of the concepts of race and class, this chapter proposes that the history of development economics in South Asia has understood labor migrants primarily as economic subjects with little or no agency. This description is based on prior racial and class constructions that are derived from culture of poverty theories. The result of this approach to economic subject making is a process of economic migration that eludes development analysis. Chapter Three is an extensive ethnography of the system of the migration industry as it produces labor migrations and an exploration

of the racial and class implications of these labor flows. As a labor history it describes the processes of exploitation in these labor diasporas and compares contemporary labor migration to that of the indentured labor of the 19th and early 20th century. The parallels of these two historical moments provide insight into the role of labor contracts in the formation of the social experience of labor migrants. Chapter Four begins an ethnographic study of the state through the issue of subject formation and the concept of the production of legality/illegality. Negotiating the terms of the state system for labor migrants is therefore also an important aspect of how the labor of migrants is constructed. As legal subjects labor migrants are placed within the fields of power of the state based on a dynamic between legal and illegal practices and subjectivities. Chapter Five explores the role of moral panics and racism as forms of representations of labor migrations. By examining the construction of the category of the Muslim in Europe and North America this chapter analyzes the rhetoric of race, terror, fear and peril. Chapter Six explores two narratives of labor migration one secular and the other religious in contemplating the use of utopias in labor migrant imaginaries. This chapter explores how secular and religious narratives are intertwined in parallel arguments in their relationship to the concept of social justice.

Chapter 1: Finding Peace: Islam, Migration and Modernity

Introduction

This chapter agues for the place of transnational labor migration in the social and cultural formation referred to as Islamic modernity. This formation places Muslim migrants in relation to one another through the multiple systems of subject formation that is organized through the properties of pan-Islam. In the multiple migrations of transnational workers from Muslim countries such as Pakistan, this formation of an Islamic modernity is integral to subject formation through the social and cultural framework of Islam. The state as a product of this modernity frames these subject positions through its role as a mediator of migration. Here Islamic modernity, it is argued is a structural formation, from which to understand the state and migration. Thus the Pakistani nation-state is integrally related to the transnational flows of its citizen-subjects. Hence, the cultural formation of Islamic modernity provides a framework to understand the relationship between the postcolonial nation-state and transnational migrants.

As a point of entry into to the debate between Islam and modernity, I consider the role of transnational migration and the formation of communities based in religious and secular reason. That is to say that through the act of migration an important process of subject formation is taking place for Muslims that involves both Islam and modernity. Further, I attempt to disengage modernity from its singular vision as an exclusively Western domain. Modernity is defined in terms of the parameters of a set of values

considered universal and a product of the European Enlightenment. As such it seeks to spread these values across the globe. Certainly, this is a practice and project of a universalizing modernity, but such homogenizing discourses do little to help comprehend the diversity of the experience of modernity. Indeed, rather than arguing against modernity and its values, I suggest spaces from which to salvage understandings of modernity in its plural form. My approach remains committed to secular struggles through an argument that seeks the potential in connecting Islam to modernity. Finding connections of the secular in discourses of modernity and Islam, as I argue, is vital to complex understandings of subjectivity and practice.

Through a review of the recent literature on alternative modernities and the general scholarship that theorizes Islam and modernity, this essay outlines the theoretical framing of this dissertation. The construction of Islamic modernities requires complex readings of social and cultural histories. Importantly, this debate raises the point of how secularism can be understood in religious modernities. By connecting concepts of work and labor to the idea of secularism and religion it is argued that these relationships are creating new cultural forms. As a final point this essay raises the point of how intentions and the work of imaginaries are constructed in and through modernity and the experience of diaspora.

Ethnographic Entries

The period since World War II has thus intensified the recruitment and employment of working classes on an international scale. Some 11 million 'temporary workers' from the Mediterranean region were at work

in the booming industrial centers of West Germany, France, Switzerland and the Benelux countries in the late 1960s…In the United States, the labor market was partly restructured by the northward movement of Afro-Americans displaced from the rapidly mechanizing South; by a nearly threefold increase in the number of working women between 1950 and 1970; and by the immigration of laborers from Mexico and the Caribbean. The oil-producing countries of the Middle East began to import a working class recruited among Egyptians, Palestinians, and Indians. Labor migration has also grown apace in Africa and Latin America…

Capitalist accumulation thus continues to engender new working classes in widely dispersed areas of the world. It recruits these working classes from a wide variety of social and cultural backgrounds, and inserts them into variable political and economic hierarchies. The new working classes change these hierarchies by their presence, and are themselves changed by the forces to which they are exposed. On one level, therefore, the diffusion of the capitalist mode creates everywhere a wider unity through the constant reconstitution of its characteristic capital-labor relationship. On another level, it also creates diversity, accentuating social opposition and segmentation even as it unifies. Within an ever more integrated world, we witness the growth of ever more diverse proletarian diasporas.

Eric Wolf, *Europe and the People Without History* (1982), 383

1.

October 2000, Dubai Airport, U.A.E.: I am sitting in duty-free Dubai on my way to Pakistan and mulling over the complexity of my situation. Here I am in this amazing global city built by the great concrete and glass heights of unfettered capital that I have nominally experienced through countless layovers. Although the obvious importance of this location as a hub for the movement of South Asian workers to the Arab world and various northern countries is readily noticeable, this time things are different. I am on my way to Pakistan to study worker-class experiences in transnational migration. Their movement to and fro, in and out of national boundaries in the pursuit of capital to ease their lives, and pursue the possibilities of their life-chances are some of the issues I will tackle. My experience in Dubai over the years has created this strange familiarity. In this node for travelers from seemingly every continent there is a semblance to other major international airports that act as holding areas for travelers. The little time I have spent here in transit gives me the simplistic yet fresh sense of the newness of this city and its glaring globalism. This is a city full of Asian migrants managed by local Arabs. This is

nothing particularly unusual. This could have easily been Riyadh, London, Doha, New York, Hong Kong, or the countless other places where South Asian diasporas have found their place. Crossing countless borders seeking work, trade, and cash, for those who seek it, has become commonplace. In the repository of my tourist ethnography I imagine the workings of a complex international labor market. I, too, had become used to this place Dubai has become: a Middle Eastern center of a kind of cosmopolitanism. I notice how my fellow travelers are also intertwined in these rituals of the international airport system. Sharing a newspaper in London a middle aged man from Karachi begins chatting with me about cricket scores. He lives in New York now and runs a gas station. He hopes to bring his children to the US for a proper education. I ran into him in the Dubai departure lounge and he beckons me to sit with him and other male Pakistani returnees. In a familiar avuncular tone he says that they will take care of me.

Unlike other worldly cities in Muslim countries such as Cairo or Istanbul, Dubai has been rapidly built in the last few decades by embracing petrodollars to create a future fantasy not only a present fantasy, the kind that many Gulf countries are still high on. The United Arab Emirates has planned beyond its oil based present in a future based in commerce, technology, and recreation. In terms of architecture and urban planning this translates into ambitious projects of an audacious scale. Islands are being created where once there were none in the shape of a palm tree and a map of the world for recreational resorts and upscale hotels. Other projects in Dubai are at the cutting edge of the global economy including an internet city, a media city and a state of the art financial center.[1]

[1] For more on this urban history and its relationship to global capitalism see Elshestawy (nd.).

The promise of Dubai's modernity, and for some a hyper-modernity, is based on the labor of a globalized working class. Hidden within the spaces of these modern built forms is the work of those who go unacknowledged. Although hidden in the compressions of labor and value placed in built form, the space of working class labor is undeniable. It is perhaps akin to what Ackbar Abbas (1997) in the context of Hong Kong calls the politics of disappearance. It is there yet not there in the acts of forgetting and making relationships invisible. For transnational labor, their work is made invisible by the workings of capitalism and the seemingly free flows of capital. Yet is such labor that makes the construction of capitalism possible.

Here in this place that is, strictly speaking, not my research site, I am struck by two issues: one, the problem of areas and research boundaries, and two, the astonishing fact of capitalism. Both issues are a quandary of time and space. The first a problem in my research, the second the issue that my research is tracking. I'm on my way to Pakistan as a Fulbright scholar, with the critique of the US governments investment in area studies and the public image of American culture in my thoughts.[2] There is a growing disjuncture between area studies research agendas and the spread of capital and labor. As a scholar of Pakistan I am supposed to study within the confines of the nation-state. As a scholar of US ethnic and diaspora studies my research agenda goes beyond the confines of the geographic boundaries of Pakistan. Here in Dubai, a city that represents a transnational zone of how capitalism cares little for boundaries of the nation-state yet nonetheless works through them, the logistics of my research agenda begin to plague me. Pakistan,

[2] Thanks to Lisa Sánchez-González for the mandatory reading: Nancy Snow's *Propaganda, Inc.: Selling America's Culture to the World* (1998).

specifically the city of Lahore, is my main research site where I will seek out the narratives of working-class transnational labor, many who are intimately familiar with the Gulf and its cities. Indeed many participated in the building of Dubai among other urban cities as the multinational labor that crafted these cities into material fact. How does one make sense of experiences in multiple locations (subjects, places, cities, states, etc.) from a single location?

As I mull over my thoughts of the possibilities of ethnography in the transit lounge, I recall an earlier trip and the larger questions it raises for my research. Over a year earlier during a weekend stopover I ventured out in the obscene June heat of Dubai to get a sense of the city. For my eyes, used to the population explosions of cities such as Lahore, Cairo and New York, the deserted downtown was striking. In the midst of buildings in this Islamic architectural style of modernity[3], it seemed like most people were either in a car or in an air-conditioned building. But it wasn't completely desolate. Along with tourists from mostly Europe and Australia, we passed construction sites filled with crews predominantly from South Asia. Indeed, my trips to the kingdoms of the United Arab Emirates (mostly Abu Dhabi and Dubai) were always full of interactions with workers from all over Asia. Whether in the service economy (hotel, restaurant and shopping staff; bus and cab drivers; medical and domestic workers) or manual laborers (construction workers), this capital driven economy is clearly creating new relationships with it's multicultural workforce. To see this newly built environment come up over the years was a bit eerie. Ghostly buildings with their distinctive modern Islamic forms

[3] In architectural history this is referred to postmodernist Islamic architecture.

seemingly hovering over waves of sand and heat. Empty now but soon to be filled with suit wearing, perfumed staff. Workers burnt in their grayish-bluish brown garments walking and laboring seemingly everywhere. Here is the point where old meets new and a point of modernity translating into capitalism. I wonder, is this a signpost of Islamic modernity? What might that mean? Is this a modernity of the new that has overtaken the traditionalism of the past? Does Islam inevitably clash with the precepts of modernity of the Western kind? It surely can't be the case that there is only one kind of modernity that grew out of the European Enlightenment. But then again, maybe that's been the plan all along.

2.

I had just finished a conversation with an Indian worker in charge of the lost and found. Going through security, someone accidentally has taken off with gifts for a friend I am to visit in Cairo. Our duty-free London bags must have been identical, so I am left with their assortment of expensive perfumes. Ironic, how material goods themselves become indistinguishable. Instead of finding my bags, I have this valuable conversation with this security officer. He's been in Dubai for the last three years. I'm immediately struck by how friendly he is; it's as if no one ever asks him the generic questions of home, country and work that I am. He tells me how lucky he was to land a job at the airport, "I wouldn't want to work out in that heat," he tells me. "But you know even though I want to go back home, I feel comfortable here. The work and the people you meet are great." When I ask him what he thinks of his place in this city he replies: "I mean, it's our work, people from

India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Thailand, the Philippines, this is an Asian city.[4]" I ask him what that means since the UAE is technically in the Asian continent. "It's not only for Arabs, its for all Asians. We come to work and build for our employers and then we go back home or we go somewhere else. Slowly things will change here, and more people from abroad will stay." I ask him how long he planned on staying in Dubai. He was filled with dreams of going back home and getting married and maybe even going elsewhere. He was filled with the confidence of success in Dubai and he felt he could meet the challenge of any new place. I was a bit more cynical. He said he would endure hardship for the sake of his family and his children. In Dubai he felt like he was comfortable but there would come a time to move on.

This conversation, as casual as it was, revealed the many layers of my own ethnographic questions. Indeed, these questions were based on certain assumptions, although not altogether wrong, but would prove difficult in reconciling as I navigated through my project. Using the theoretical tools of political economy, labor history, and diaspora studies this project addresses the workings of capitalism in a global market set in modernity. The idea of maintaining a successful economy in modern terms is to maintain a growing, prosperous middle class. Further, this idea of a market driven economy must be exported to all other economies.

[4] There are several reasons why he may not have initially mentioned Pakistan. It wasn't until later that I told him that was my final destination. And in all likelihood the number of Pakistanis in the service sector is considerably less compared to other nationalities. Only recently have Pakistan nationals been recruited in this sector mostly in the medical, business and information technology arenas. This is due to the complex of state control, educational requirements and the popular construction of the Pakistani in the Gulf as a brawny working class laborer rather than a brainy service economy worker.

What I had witnessed in the migration patterns from the subcontinent throughout its labor diasporas to the Gulf, Europe and North America, is a pattern in which the bodies of laborers are chasing capital all over the globe. These laborers are taking part in the construction of a certain kind of modernity both literal and metaphoric. For the part of European and American capital, this means the preservation of well-established modes of production. In the Gulf States petrodollars are creating something new, a different kind of modernity that is quite stark. This is an important point, because this is *modernity*, a particular form for sure, but nonetheless the thing itself. But what needs to be made clear is how this localized form of modernity relates to Islamic culture and Muslims. Much of the analysis of the debate between Islam and modernity has often glossed them over as universalizing projects. And as such these assumptions take for granted operational definitions of modernity as Western modernity and its particular meanings. But how might one imagine Islamic modernity, not really as an alternative to modernity,[5] but as another form? Further, how might one understand the relationship of Islamic modernity to capitalism as Anouar Majid (2000) has recently asked in the vein of the ground-breaking work of Samir Amin (1974; 1985; 1989)?

My ethnographic tourism is a point of entry for this research. Indeed, it is central to the contemplation of the thorny debate over Islam and modernity. Both concepts are reified as a representation of particular belief systems. Islam represents a religious community through its imagined community of believers, the *umma*. Modernity is a

[5] This is more the point of right-wing Islamism that enacts a fundamentalism that is counter to the ideas of modernity in all its forms. In doing so it deploys modernity towards its absolutist ends of an Islamic state and Islamic hegemony. See Sayyid (1997) on this point.

product of the European Enlightenment with its conception of the universal subject. Islam as a category is seen as a religious category that is reduced to Islamism as a practice.[6] Such a view is not only the scope of a Western Orientalist gaze, but also prevalent within Muslim societies as well. Modernity, politically associated with the ideas of secular democracy and capitalism is given the valence of good, while Islam, read as religious and theocratic hence anathema to democracy, is bad. This reading offers little space to maneuver between these two concepts – both seemingly opposed to one another. The argument I am introducing, however, seeks a historically nuanced understanding of their relationship. Further, it questions the possibility of a complex entity called Islamic modernity as a social, economic, political, cultural and historical formation, as well as but not exclusively a religious one. Also in question is whether this formation is appropriately named Islamic modernity or Muslim modernity.[7] Indeed Islamic modernity is the more fraught term. Comparatively a Christian modernity, Hindu modernity, or Jewish Modernity might share certain aspects of form in terms of thinking of religion as theology.[8] However, the particularities of an Islamic modernity emerge when thinking of

[6] Islamism is generally a gloss for multiple sets of practices associated with orthodox Islam. As a term it makes more sense then the popular term Islamic fundamentalism. This latter term conflates political ideology with the social and cultural. Recent ethnographic scholarship has focused attention on differentiating between Islamist and Islamic movements in relation to the concepts of piety, see Hirschkind (2001) and Mahmood (2001).

[7] Eqbal Ahmad eloquently points out the distinction between Islam and Muslim in its political meaning. The former referring to a religion and the latter to groups of people, and hence a more secular connotation (Ahmad 2000, 136-7). I rely on this distinction but would like to further elaborate on the concept of secularism and Islam. My use of Islamic comes from the insistence that secular discourses be recuperated in Islamic history. The point of which is to connect it to the secularism of progressive struggles of modernity.

[8] Hefner (1998) argues that these contemporary religions face structural problems in their interaction with modernity, an argument that relies on the secular-religious split. Yet, oddly his conclusions seem to point in the direction of a pluralism in religion that incorporates the secular. This is perhaps true, but one wonders if the secular ever disappeared from the religious since the concept of the secular emerges from religion rather than the other way around. See Asad (1993, 2003).

religion as culture. In this sense the history of Islam is not only a religious sphere but a social one. Indeed part of this history is the place of secularisms within the worldview of Islam, rather than outside of it, as traditionally thought in the emergence of secularism from Christianity. Hence, this is to argue that there are secular spaces within Islam. As such these are important points of connection that offer the possibility of mutual struggle.

Part of this project is to disentangle the meaning of Islam and modernity in an effort to dislodge their parochial meanings. As I argue, much of the dialectic between Islam and modernity in my research has to do with migration. As ideas and concepts migrate, they come and go with the movements of groups of people. The process and effect of migration is central to both Islam and modernity. This process and interaction of migration with Islam and modernity plays a pivotal role in the construction of migrant subjectivities. As shared experiences, migration for both Islam and modernity is a point to enter secular history and the rationality of both religious and secular discourses.

The Shape of Modernity

> Within the framework of Eurocentrism's impossible project, the ideology of the market – with its democratic complement, assumed to be almost a given – has become a veritable theology, bordering on the grotesque. For the progressive unification of the commodities and capital markets alone, without being accompanied by gigantic migrations of populations, has absolutely no chance of equalizing the economic conditions in which different peoples live.
> Samir Amin, *Eurocentrism* (1989), 112

In Samir Amin's cogent description of European modernity is an apt description of the dilemma of Enlightenment thought. Indeed, the liberalism of Enlightenment values is predicated on notions of equality and democratic principle. Therein lies the problem.

With the process of capitalism inherently based on differentiation and hierarchy, how does one make claims to the possibilities of reconciling these differences toward a future based in equality. This notion of equality it might be argued is the sense in which the modern state views its subjects – citizens are equal in the eyes of the law. Equality in social relationships is then the possibility of individual achievement. Competing in the system of unequal relationships of capitalism provides the sense of similar conditions. But similarity and equality are not the same thing and hence the impossibility of this project. Nonetheless the idea of the struggle for freedom inherent in democratic principles is perhaps the antidote to this dilemma. The idea of freedom provides a more processual understanding to struggles for social and economic rights in ways that equality cannot. Equality then is a state of being, or an ideal type, from which the state is assumed to operate; freedom is an endless struggle for rights and recognition.

Modernity itself is a fraught category that for long has attempted to universalize the aims of market and democratic logic. Migration is itself an essential part of modernity. This global phenomenon of modernity has taken many shapes and forms. In a special issue of the journal *Public Culture* entitled "Alter/native Modernities," Dilip Gaonkar describes modernity as a dialectic between societal modernization and cultural modernity (1999,1). Societal modernization constitutes cognitive and social transformations that are the

> idealized self-understanding of bourgeois modernity historically associated with the development of capitalism in the West that called into existence not only a distinctive mode of production but also a new type of subject – an agent who was set free from constraints imposed by tradition to pursue its own private ends and whose actions were at once motivated by acquisitiveness and regulated by "(this) worldy asceticism." (2)

This new subject is the secular, rational, individual contained within the social vision of a modern community. Encapsulated within the modern form of capitalism and ruled through the democratic auspices of the state, the self is imagined in terms of the instrumental rationality of the state. Opposing this set of ideas of order and discipline is another modernity, as Gaonkar argues, that is cultural modernity.[9] Here the bourgeois modernity of technical efficiency is substituted by an emphasis on creativity and the imagination that gained prominence in modern aesthetics. The goal of which is to concentrate "spontaneous expression, authentic expression, and unfettered gratification of one's creative and carnal urges" in the heroic pursuit of fleeting "glimpses of beauty, premonitions of happiness, and a modicum of wisdom"(3). The worldly asceticism of social modernization is opposed by the desires cultural modernity. Here this mysticism of modernity celebrates a subjectivity that is entangled in many worlds at once. This conflict creates a double vision more akin to Dubois's idea of double consciousness, a mode of being that is fragmented by modern life yet seeks unity and participation within it.[10] This dialectical reading sees subjectivity as split into at least two modes that owe their existence to the fractures within the meaning of modernity.

Gaonkar extends this idea of doubleness to represent the tensions found throughout theories of modernity. Hence the trajectory from Weber to Habermas are

[9] In another essay in this volume by Charles Taylor entitled "Two Theories of Modernity" (1999) this idea is split between the acultural and cultural models of modernity that roughly match Gaonkar's views on social modernization and cultural modernity. Taylor's argument places acultural modernity, with its universalist and ahistorical tendencies, in opposition to cultural modernity from which the idea of plural modernities emerge. See also Taylor's influential tome on Western modernity and subject formation *Sources of the Self* (1989). See also Lisa Rofel (1999) who thinks in terms of the creative and destructive tendencies of modernity.

[10] Oddly, Gaonkar makes use of 'double consciousness' (1999, 3) but makes no reference to W.E.B. Dubois. One can only surmise that Gaonkar sees this 'other' modernity as trapped in the unmarked modernity of the European white male subject.

associated with societal modernity and from Baudelaire to Foucault with cultural modernity. In his reading this dialectic of oppositionality and difference is conjoined through a set of mutual interconnections. As Gaonkar argues this dualism of modernity contains a value-laden oppositionality: modernity has its bright side and its dark side. This is true for both kinds of modernity, the societal and the cultural. Indeed, in this dialectical thinking there is a built-in and necessary slippage in this relationship based on the idea of difference. For both oppositions contain bright and dark sides and are linked to one another through their possibilities and contradictions. Neither type of modernity is inherently bright or dark, good or bad, but necessarily both.

This reading and its ethical account owes much to the Frankfurt school analysis of modernity. Gaonkar discusses Horkheimer and Adorno's important *Dialectic of Enlightenment*(1997 [orig. 1972]) in passing, and does indeed provide an elaboration of Habermas's thought at length. This opening in Gaonkar's reading of modernity offers an opportunity to think through some of the possibilities of alternative modernities. And in the spirit of his use of dialectics, I would like to propose another that relies on a more mystical reading, rather than metaphysical,[11] of theories of modernity. To begin with, what Horkheimer and Adorno observed in the *Dialectic* and elsewhere[12] in terms of what they call the *evil* of instrumental reason and the authoritarian state (1997, xv) is qualitatively different from the aspects of modernity that are simply bad or dark. This evil is the demonic realm of the Enlightenment that perpetuates self-destruction, domination,

[11] By this I am also referring to the Frankfurt school theories of language that explore the theological dimensions of language. See for example Benjamin's essay "The Task of the Translator" in *Illuminations*(1968).
[12] See Horkheimer (1996 [orig.1974]), and his essays "The End of Reason" and " The Authoritarian State" in Arato and Genhardt (1998 [orig.1982]).

and terror. Such a force can be located from states to subjects. Surely Horkheimer and Adorno's attack on the Enlightenment, coming in the context of the horror of genocide, fascism and war, is an indictment of the celebration of modernity.[13] In their cultural analysis, Horkheimer and Adorno elaborate on their central motif of the role of myth in the transition to an industrialized society. In creating this modern idea of society based on domination of the social order, and in the manufacture of fear, a new myth is created:

> Domination lends increased consistency and force to the social whole in which it establishes itself. The division of labor to which domination tends to serve the dominated whole for the end of self-preservation. But then the whole as whole, the manifestation of its immanent reason, necessarily leads to the execution of the particular. To the individual domination appears to be the universal: reason in actuality. Through the division of labor imposed on them, the power of all the members – for whom as such there is no other course – amounts over and over again to the realization of the whole, whose rationality is reproduced in this way. What is done to all by the few, always occurs as the subjection of individuals by the many: social repression always exhibits the masks of repression by a collective. It is this unity of the collectivity and domination, and not direct social universality, solidarity, which is expressed in thought forms. (Horkheimer and Adorno 1997[orig. 1972], 21-22).

Here their argument echoes Gramsci's thoughts on the role of state hegemony that is a process of coercion and consent. The process of state control masks its power through the workings of domination. This new myth, based on the primacy of rational thinking, is derived from a system of domination that is a secular version of control substituted for the domain of religion: "animism spiritualized the object, whereas industrialism objectifies the spirits of men" (Horkheimer and Adorno 1997[orig. 1972], 28).[14] Secular

[13] For a summary of the debate over the relevance of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* and the connection of the Enlightenment to modernity see Sherratt (2000). Many scholars have dismissed this work as too cynical in its approach, but given the circumstances to its writing, their opprobrium is understandable. Nonetheless, Horkheimer and Adorno are clearly arguing for a recovery of modernity rather than its abandonment.

[14] Martin Jay translates this as "animism had spiritualized objects; industrialism objectified spirits" (1973, 260). This translation leaves the meaning of 'spirits' as open to the idea of an exterior entity outside of humanity and not just the idea of human courage and solidarity.

rationalism excises religion and the idea of the *nomen*, yet merely replaces the terms from which this system of domination functions. This shift in modernity concludes that power is no longer located in the sphere of religion – but only in the knowable universe of secular categories. The state form thus emerges out of a system of religious control and structure of power that mimics religious domination.

Horkheimer and Adorno's critique of Enlightenment modernity echoes Nietzche's indictment of systems of morality in the *Genealogy of Morals* (1967), for which they have been criticized.[15] But what is of greater relevance is their critique in terms of its allegorical force. Horkheimer and Adorno make a strong argument to understand the evil of modernity in terms of morality. This point of morality as the underpinning of modernity gets lost in readings of modernity as exclusively *a secular modernity*. Here the values of modernity are thought of as outside of the dilemmas of morality and emotionalism and firmly placed in the supposedly unbiased rationality of secular reason. Hence it is assumed that there is no prior history of the values of modernity. Gaonkar's reading is rightly one of a secular modernity, given the lineage and trajectory he wishes to establish. But to say there is a secular modernity raises the possibility of religious modernities.[16] Both act to universalize their claims: the secular to the power of the state, and the religious to the power of the state *and* the divine. The idea of a religious modernity complicates the place of the secular as Talal Asad has argued (2003). Rather

[15] See Sherratt (2000).
[16] Here I in no way mean to equate religious modernity with theological modernity, even though they are related.

than eliminating the concept of the secular, religious modernities can encompass the secular within a system of power rather than claim its exteriority.

Derrida's essay "Faith and Knowledge" in *Acts of Religion*(2002) proposes a similar connection. To talk of 'religion without religion,' and to hence cast the place of the religious in the world, he crafts an argument for the mystical in the secular subject. This is indeed an argument that places the importance of the divine and the theological as a force of power and the political. To talk religion for Derrida is to think of a future not only based in faith but in justice. This political reading asserts a reconnection of the philosophical to the theological. The former generally seen as a secular practice and the latter as religious. The division of these two forms of scholarship, although necessary, creates particular methodological problems. How does the unbeliever comprehend the believer and vice versa? Does one have to believe to experience the life-worlds of believers? Can one be a part-time believer? Is belief necessarily constitutive of intersubjective understanding? For Derrida, subjectivity is a naming of an experience. Gaonkar's dialectic of subjectivities split between the technical-social-efficient and the creative-cultural-imaginary are what Derrida sees as the traditional opposition between reason and mysticism (2000, 57). As Derrida somewhat elliptically argues, prior to these forms of subjectivity, and prior to any sense of community, there is a shared abstracted space through the metaphor of the desert that unites the Abrahamic religions in a potential political project.

> *Without this desert in the desert, there would be neither act of faith, nor promise, nor future, nor expectancy without expectation of death and of the other, nor relation to the singularity of the other. The chance of this desert in the desert (as of that which resembles to a fault, but without reducing irself to, that via negative which makes its*

> *way from a Graeco-Judaeo-Christian tradition) is that in uprooting the tradition that bears it, in atheologizing it, this abstraction, without denying faith, liberates a universal rationality and political democracy that cannot be dissociated from it.* (italics in orig. Derrida 2002, 57)

For Derrida the secular and the religious are aligned in modern society in overlapping ways that has potential in struggles for justice. As moral arguments they are united in Western ideas of the law and its practices of jurisprudence. But even further, they become ideas to uphold the practices and technologies of modernity. A liberated universalist rationality and democracy are then read through their genealogy to the morals of the Abrahamic religions.

To return to the idea of modernity, secular and religious must be understood as inhabiting similar spaces. The advent of secularism in no way obliterated the religious. And indeed in the particular developments of alternative modernities, what constitutes as secular, and its relation to the religious, has taken on new and quite different meanings. Such an orientation allows us to rethink the ways in which modernities are crafted through the roles of states, imaginaries, subjectivities, citizenship, and capital.

Islam, Muslims and Modernity

It is quite commonplace to refer to modernity as an exclusive product of European history and thought. Surely, the legacy of modernity owes much to the European Enlightenment project. This thing named modernity is to be sure a European concept. Modernity as an idea and as a history, however, was never isolated. Western modernity of course owes much of its moral development to the experience of colonialism and European imperial

endeavors.[17] From European modernity spawned many other forms of modernity from the colonial agenda of creating carbon-copies of others in the original image of the West. The program of civilizing the Orient, so well elucidated in the work of Edward Said (1978, 1993), created the space from which to carry out colonial experiments. The experience of modernity in the Muslim world in many ways is a product of such an interaction. As an alternative modernity the limits of this interaction are shaped by the on-going struggle to realize this formation. Importantly the connections of this experience are co-produced through historical context and the question of how alternative modernities are structured. As a political question then, there is the necessity to raise the question of how the colonial interaction organized such a modernity. Islam, as a religion is also an organizing principle of a life-world. It is understood to be cultural, political, economic, and social.[18] It is national, international and transnational. Beyond fundamentalist and Orientalist readings it is not homogenous, but diverse, contested, and dynamic.

Islamic modernity, I argue, has a far broader meaning than Islamist modernity. But as a counter to the Islamist reaction and interaction with modernity, the use of Islamic does not discount it. Islamism is at its most fundamental a project of modernity. As many authors have argued contemporary Islamism, so-called Islamic fundamentalism, is a product of the encounter of Islamic societies with modernity. It is not just a reaction

[17] See for example Mehta (1999) treatment of the development of British liberal thought through the debates surrounding the experience of empire. Mehta's argument interestingly connects the concepts of reason with sentiments to understand the rational ground of multiple systems of morality.

[18] Many scholars argue that Islam should not be understood as a culture, as Orientalists would have it. On the contrary I find it necessary to argue that the Islamic is one cultural element among many, but an important one that should not be divorced from cultural discourse. In this vein Al-Azmeh prefers to refer to this as social Islam (1993).

to it but a synthesis of it (Sayyid 1997). The question of modernity and Islam than becomes one of how to understand the particular formations of Muslim modernities which are necessarily plural. Islam and the Islamic as a world-historical force is itself universalist and makes claims to a singular narrative of history. In plural form such claims break down into parochial form.[19] Secularism, the idea of reform, democracy, capitalism, etc., all exist in various forms in Islamic history. But each has underpinnings in an ethos that either directly or indirectly is linked in a historical relationship to what can be called Islamic society and culture, as much as the experience of colonialism, modernization and integration in the global political economy. This confounds certain conceptual understandings, in particular whether there is a modernity that is Islamic and not in some way connected to Europe. Thus, for example, is there Islamic democracy, or Islamic secularism? What might that mean, and what is the use of such entities?

Secularism, understood as worldly actions that are not solely religious, has meaning in Islamic discourses (cf. Al-Azmeh 1993, and in Arabic *Al-Ilmaniyya* 1992, Beirut). But aside from the potential of religious readings of secularism, there is also the importance of claiming secularism as a political modality that exists outside of religion (but again not necessarily separate from it). Hence, one of the inherent paradoxes in the debate of Islam and modernity is the exact place of secularism. In the encounter between the two, modernity has made its place within Islamic society but they also exist in tension, particularly when it comes to concepts deemed foreign to purist approaches to Islamic history. Indeed, for long secularism has been seen as a product of Western

[19] Aziz Al-Azmeh's essays in *Islams and Modernities* (1993) are quite insightful in articulating this point of a universal subject in Islamic discourse and its simultaneous historical plurality.

modernity and not implicit within Islamic history. To recoup such a point requires a rethinking of the concept of secularism itself. For this analysis it is important to understand secularism in tension with religious radicalism, but not necessarily opposed to religious readings. The importance of this project is to think of modern forms of subjectivity that exist in this tension – as both religious and secular. An anthropology of the secular must be interrelated with religious discourses.

The classic work on Islam's relationship to modernity is Fazlur Rahman's *Islam and Modernity* written in 1982. Rahman writes of traditions of education within the Islamic world and the intellectual grounds of Islamic modernity. He makes the debate quite lively arguing the antecedents of a fully-fledged Islamic modernity. This epistemological work argues that the project of Islamic modernity as a grand narrative maintains its universality. Although he recognizes the distinct nature of Western and Islamic forms of modernity, particularly in terms of educational models, his analysis does not elaborate the multiplicity of these universalisms. And although he undoes much of the Orientalist thinking that would place Islam as anti-modern, Rahman fails to offer a viable alternative to false universals. This ground that Rahman establishes is given a further push in Aziz Al Azmeh's *Islams and Modernities* (1993). In this complex and nuanced set of arguments, Al-Azmeh places the multiple existences of Islam and Western modernity in the context of their universalist logic. Through their claims of irreducibility and progressivist notions of universal history (Al-Azmeh 1993, 75), both Islam and modernity argue a superior vision of the world. But neither is mutually exclusive of the other. An Islamic based notion of modernity although quite different from the idea of a

Western modernity transforming Islam, cannot be removed from one another. The Islamist argument of modernity as a foreign other is of course a historical fallacy. European modernity is built on the influences of multiple civilizations as has been argued by many fronts now. The existence of any Islamic modernity is as of yet to be widely accepted.[20]

This problem of universalist thought is in many ways itself everywhere. In Clifford Geertz's landmark essay "Religion as a Cultural System"(1973) he attempts to revamp anthropological approaches to the study of religion. These criticisms of the anthropology of religion apply to many contemporary studies, that for example in the study of Islam assume a universal Muslim subject. In doing so, such approaches ignore multiple subject positions that might include both secular and religious categories. What is immediately noticeable is Geertz's emphasis of the religious in the everyday and vice versa. This is as if to say that in some way the religious and the secular are inseparable even if they are conceptually separate. The secular and religious commingle in a fluid discourse. As Talal Asad has pointed out the main problem is Geertz's universalizing of these categories is the failure to question how they come to be conceptualized and authorized (1993, 43). The larger processes of power do not belie the implications of Geertz's argument. But as Asad argues historians have tended to view religion as emerging from the secular (1993, 2003). This is itself based on the universalist categories

[20] Without a doubt contemporary adventures to consolidate American empire has been made in the name of forcing countries that have supposedly rejected modernity to enter the modern global order. This is no doubt a cover for creating favorable markets for Western economic interests. Thomas Friedman the New York Time's op-ed writer has made it a habit to call for interventions in the Islamic world based on a logic that harkens back to colonialism. The gist of many of his arguments places the West as a category as progressive, democratic, good, and modern, opposed by the category of Islamic as backward, terrorist, evil, and anti-modern. See Friedman 2002.

of modernity that essentialize the categories of religion and modernity. This results in the thinking of the secular world as real and the religious as imaginary. In the Muslim world the post-colonial state has much to do with the mediation of these concepts. It is precisely through state control, both consent and coercion, that establishes the framework of the religious and the secular.

Following the work of Charles Hirshkind (2001) and Saba Mahmood (2001) I would like to elaborate on these connections between the religious and the secular in terms of its practice in certain publics. As Hirshkind has suggested there is a need to think in terms of Islamic counterpublics where citizenship is expressed in forms of religious reason. This kind of rationality is quite common throughout the Muslim world. A deferment of rational and logical argument to ethical forms of reason based in Islamic discourse is a mode of increasingly popular expression in the public sphere. Such reasoning is based in an ethical imperative for the virtuous as both Hirchkind (2001) and Mahmood (2001) direct us. What is important here is that this is a means to pay attention to how religious discourse interacts with secular discourse. As a counterpublic, or more appropriately a public, with multiple influences located in a scheme of various publics. This concept of Islamic counterpublics then allows a range of positionalities in which the interaction of religious reason and secular reason are ethical modalities of critique.[21] Such differentiation is necessary to understanding the complex worlds of subject formation within Islamic modernities.

[21] For recent diasporic examples of this in the Islamic media see the work of Mandaville (2001a; 2001b) and Sardar (1993).

Secularism: Provincializing Islam and the West

The moods and motivations a religious orientation produces cast a derivative, lunar light over the solid features of a people's secular life.
Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System" in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (1973), 124.

A rationalized religion is, to the degree that it is rationalized, self-conscious and worldly-wise. Its attitude to secular life may be various…
Clifford Geertz, "'Internal Conversion' in Contemporary Bali" in *The Interpretation of Cultures*, (1973), 171.

In the Introduction to *The World, the Text, and the Critic* (1983) Edward Said proposed a category of analysis he called secular criticism. This type of critique he offered delves into "local and worldly situations" (26) that makes its intention a kind of affiliation, a kind of intersubjective connection. By this he is pointing to the necessity of common humanity in his world-view and the larger political goal of criticism in pushing forth toward human freedom, a position firmly within the position of modernity. This humanism is not without its problems. Indeed someone like Ashish Nandy (1990) would criticize it as an imposition of external values. But where these ideas come from is perhaps less important than the possibilities they create. The use of secular criticism, I would argue, provides a possible opening in the impasse between the universalist categories of Islam and the West. As such the concept of the secular might offer a contact point from which to further common goals of freedom and emancipation as Said has so eloquently argued.

In the context of India, Nandy rightly argues that the discourse of secularism has been used to subvert the concept of religious tolerance (1990). His view is to dismantle

the damage that secularism has done in its use of colonial categories, and to revert to a pre-colonial/Gandhian notion of religious tolerance. As important as this argument may be, this position fails to see the importance of secularism to religious tolerance and perhaps gives up too quickly on the necessity for struggles for secularism.[22] In a more recent context, Kolluri and Mir (2002) argue for the necessity to articulate secular subjectivities in their full complexity. They propose an engagement with secularism that allows for long-term struggle that far outweighs its colonial baggage. Arguing that the experience of secularism in India has created more debate than consensus, such diversity offers greater possibilities rather than closing them off. In short, the pursuit of secular strategies offers sites of struggle.

As a formal methodological category , Said's idea of secular criticism is a vague one. Said refers to notions of historical time and worldliness derived from Vico to describe his thinking of how secular criticism operates. As such it is a process of historicizing that offers a sense of clarity and precision. This worldliness is also a way of knowing and coming to being. Yet, part of the confusion also lies in the place of the secular in relationship to categories such as religion and nationalism. In an important article, Aamir Mufti (1998) challenges the claim made by Bruce Robbins (1994) that the secular is in opposition to nationalism rather than religion. Mufti agrees that secularism at times challenges notions of belonging in nationalism, but he differs however in his placement of secular criticism, a device he argues is mutually aimed at religion and

[22] See Bilgrami's (1998) critique of Nandy's argument. Bilgrami comes to this same conclusion on Nandy through his argument of promoting the struggle of secularism through the modern state. See also Bilgrami (1994).

nationalism. Hence Mufti argues that "secular criticism seeks continually to make it perceptible that the experience of being at home can only be produced by rendering some other homeless." Further, "secular criticism is aimed at the mutual determinations of the religious and the national, at the unequal division of the field of national experience into domains marked by religious difference" (1998, 107). The consciousness of a secular criticism is based on an ethical imperative that seeks to parochialize universalisms into their particularities. Hence, Said uses the shift from filiation to affiliation, from blood and kinship to community and connection, to make this clear. This is a move that takes originary claims (filiation) and historicizes their local meanings (affiliation) to overcome the paradox of inclusion and exclusion in social categories such as nation or religion.

Said's notion of history, however, falls into trouble from the perspective that it seemingly purports to stand in for real history. As Asad (2003, 191), in tentative agreement with Mufti, argues the secular is as much endowed with power and produced as a system of belief as are nationalism and religion. This is a key point in that it raises the question of the role of the state in framing the debates over the secular question in the public sphere. But as Asad points out state power does not provide the entire picture: "objects, sites, practices, words, representations – even the minds and bodies of worshipers – cannot be confined within the exclusive space of what secularists *name* 'religion'" (201). Such a naming is a way of creating categories out of fluid social spaces – including secular, religious and national. Secular criticism from this perspective then has its greatest utility in gauging the multiplicity of social life. This comes with the caveat as Said might argue that secular here does not exclude religion, but is mutually

constituted by it. Secularism is then a set of practices that contribute to the creation of the category of the secular. But the secular is also found in its relationship to religion, hence religion is also responsible for the formation of the secular.

Forging a connection between the secular discourses of Western modernity and that of Islam is a project that seeks to resurrect shared histories. In these histories are practices of power that have created this relationship. As Leila Ahmed (1992, 37) notes in her landmark work on women, Islam, and gender: Islam and Western civilization have shared histories that have been erased by the experience of colonialism and the Orientalist practices of erasure and distortion.[23] To constitute this shared relationship is to reconsider shared practices and their specific configurations. In this sense the secular is both similar and dissimilar in the evolution of these two traditions. But this does not discount a mutual perspective of a shared reason that is secular criticism. In reality this bolsters the argument for its possibility and specificity.

Migration and Class: Muslim Diasporas and Diasporic Muslims

There is a big difference between the Muslims of the diaspora…those whose parents migrated to Western lands…and those who still live in the House of Islam. The latter are far more critical because religion is not crucial to their identity. It's taken for granted that they are Muslims.
Tariq Ali, *The Clash of Fundamentalisms: Crusades, Jihads, and Modernity* (2002), 310-11.

In the context of Muslim diasporas where does one place secular criticism? The importance of this lies in the production of narratives in and through state systems and

[23] Earlier I pointed out Derrida's similar position on the history of the Abrahamic religions. An interesting project might also compare the modernity of Western philosophy (e.g. Taylor 1989) with that of Islamic philosophy (e.g. Al-Azmeh 1986; Fakhry 1983).

the migration process. Class as a subjectivity of relational consciousness is a site from which to understand how identities and forms of knowledge are produced. Indeed religion plays a central role in this but in a spectrum of positionalities. The process of migration itself entails different points of subject formation.[24] This is important in working class diasporas where the accumulation of capital is dependent in maintaining reserve pools of international labor. Migration then is a means to pursue capital and greater life-chances. But such opportunity is structured by several systems of power, predominantly the state and its forms of governmentality that insure its efficient exploitation in the production of capital. Even though the state controls access on so many levels, this work also seeks to delineate the shape of such subject formation that claims to exist outside of the state. Thus, following my argument of the place of secular criticism in Muslim subjectivities, is it possible that the secular of the state is separate from the secular of an everyday practice of Muslim subjectivity? Are there points of incommensurability between governmentality and subjectivity?

A related point to class is the construction of race and gender in transnational flows of working-class labor. Increasingly, race is becoming transnationalized based on histories of colonialism and the increasingly global language of differentiation articulated through the categories of race, class and gender. Such practices are not always named as such, but the identification of these rhetorics and their genealogies is vitally important to struggles against categories of oppression. Gender is a much more visible signifier of the global work force. Indeed, in many ways working class migrants are gendered in ways

[24] Hence immigration privileges the destination, emigration starting points, migration privileges the route, and diaspora the roots.

that intersect the categories of race and class. Again, such connections are important in discussing categories of social identification that are taken for granted.

The positionalities of labor migrants in the South Asian diaspora mediated by class and the access to capital. Working-class migrations are markedly different from their professional counterparts. The most immediate difference is state selection by northern countries. Status and class position is also an important element. Converting such social and cultural capital into its economic forms comes through a certain sense of the world – a kind of secular criticism – what Pnina Werbner (1999) in the context of Pakistani working-class migrations has called a cosmopolitan attitude. These ethnic worlds as she calls them are ways of recreating cultural worlds in new social circumstances where competition is stiff and access to capital is limited. This cosmopolitanism implies the possibility of multiple positionalities in contradictory circumstances. It is a worldliness that exhibits how multiple subjectivities are formed. More concretely, in the example of Muslim diasporas it questions the place of what religion means in connection to the secular. Further it probes the possibility of a continuum between the two where cultural practices are intertwined in religious and secular practice. In this context it is pertinent to ask what religious practice entails, and for that matter whether the concept of a secular Muslim makes sense.[25]

Here it is important to ask whether a religious diaspora has a focal point, that is what are its homelands, or whether it is a cultural diaspora with a religious guise –

[25] Akeel Bilgrami in his essay "What is a Muslim? Fundamental Commitment and Cultural Identity" (1992) points us in this direction of thinking of the multiplicity of Muslim identity.

Muslim diasporas or diaspora Muslims so to speak.[26] Again I would defer to the idea that to use Muslim connotes a group of people that is organized by cultural themes including religion that is more of a secular conception. In terms of an Islamic modernity this makes sense, since Muslims of all spectrum exist in a single universalizing world-view. But to call this a diaspora is to also localize this experience to a comparative experience of cross-cultural diasporas. Muslims then are correctly differentiated into other cultural categories such as nation, ethnicity etc. Further, this argument depends on how Muslims in the diaspora themselves place the importance of their religious identities in relation to other forms of identification. Akeel Bilgrami has argued that the preeminence of Muslim as a category of recognition is because of a surplus phenomenology of identity (1992, 833). This is an excess that is created out of the relations of power and dominance in the modern history of Muslims and Islam. This history of subordination and condescension by the West has created this residue without a point, a point of identification that unifies a commitment to a struggle – ie. the Muslim cause. This is an important organizing principle to further the analysis of Muslims in diaspora. It is a forceful conceptualization of the growing identification to Islam in Muslim diasporas across the political spectrum.

The question then becomes how do Muslims imagine their experience in diaspora? What are the concepts of home and imagined community? How is identity constructed? Islam itself has prescribed a mapping of diaspora. Indeed, within Islam, migration is one of the foundational and recommended elements of the faith. The

[26] Relatedly, Boyarin and Boyarin (1993) argue that for some Jews the promised land as a homeland was marked within the national boundaries in which they lived. This was an autochthonous relationship to places they migrated to, rather than an actual nation-state in the form of Israel.

example of the Prophet's migration is an important and influential moment in the early history of Islam. Hadith of the Prophet have also been recorded stating his recommendation of travel for Muslims.[27] As many scholars of religion in diaspora have noted there is a language of diaspora in Islam (Eickleman and Piscatori 1990; Haddad 1993; Lewis 1994; Metcalf 1996). Based in Arabic it maps the spatial compatibility of the Islamic world to that of the non-Islamic world. Its vocabulary includes: *dar al Islam* (land of Islam), *dar al aman* (land of peace), *dar al harb* (land of war), *dar al ahd* (land of pact), *dar al sulh* (land of truce), *dara al ahl e kitab* (land of people of the book[Abrahamic religions]), etc. The word *dar* here meaning land, abode or house. This language of home and away for Muslims certainly does have its meaning. For these religion scholars however, this reliance on the language of religious meaning is based upon homogenous categories of religious belief. This is not to say that there is no complexity, but it does seem far too simple to read Islamic practice outside of the possibilities of subjectivity and the heterogeneity of Muslim identity. In other words, it assumes there is no meaning for the Muslim outside of religion. Islam as a universalizing agent translates into an exclusively religion centered subjectivity. Further, that a secular discourse and description of diaspora is not at work from a religious point of view. As Talal Asad might point out, the question how this language is authorized and in what ways does it reinscribe power. There are also outstanding questions of the multiple ways that Muslims identify especially according to national, ethnic or other cultural identifications.

[27] See Masud's (1990) textual analysis of migration in Islam.

The complexity of Muslim diasporas is further complicated by the possible geographic components. Is it possible to think of religious homelands as separate from ethnic and national ones? What are the homelands of religious diasporas? And in the case of Islam does everyone agree? There is certainly a large degree of interplay between religious, national and other forms of cultural diasporas. The task then is to make sense of how and when they become important to articulate. Here the role of imaginaries in terms of homelands, fantasy, imagined communities and identities offers ways to think beyond the essentialized Muslim subject.

Ethnographic Imaginaries: Actually Existing Secularism (Taking Back the World)

A secular subject like history faces certain problems in handling practices in which gods, spirits, or the supernatural have agency in the world…Labor, the activity of producing, is seldom a completely secular activity in [South Asia]; it often entails, through rituals big and small, the invocation of divine or superhuman presence. Secular histories are usually produced by ignoring the signs of these presences. Such histories represent a meeting of two systems of thought, one in which the world is ultimately, that is, in the final analysis, disenchanted, and the other in which humans are not the only meaningful agents. For the purposes of writing history, the first system, the secular one, translates the second into itself.
Dipesh Chakrabarty, *Provicializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference* (2000, 72)

What does it mean to see the world as enchanted? For a long time now, the secular ethnographic gaze has become accustomed to seeing the world as disenchanted, to use the words of Weber. The legacy of objectivist science has very much been a part of the modernist project of collecting and understanding knowledge as it exists in the world. Such knowledge production has been part and parcel of projects of modernity and modernization. The limitations of such projects is based in the failure to complicate

categories of analysis.[28] The challenge that lies in this work is to undermine traditional descriptive modes of ethnographic surveillance of anthropological subjects with accounts of how processes of exploitation, labor and capital maintain structures of power. The examples of these processes of access and control come in the narratives of the experience of labor migrants. As feminist scholarship has long shown the methods with which forms of knowledge are made sense of, has much to do with positionality and multiple subjectivity (eg. John 1996; Mani 1989; Mohanty 1987). As a tool of comprehension and analysis this approach is centrally about starting points. For secular social science, then, the study of religion is done through a secular practice. This necessary bias has for long has created a particular view of the religious in everyday life. Dipesh Chakarbarty's call to for a reexamination of the non-secular in secular history provokes multiple issues within the study of life-worlds. To begin such a process also precisely entails an examination of the methods and problems of writing such histories.[29]

Part of this task of writing history has to do with ethnographic time, both secular and religious. These differing modalities of space and meaning complicate how ethnography is to be understood. For anthropological practice, the ethnographic present offers a description of processes understood in secular time. But where are religious conceptions to be found? Indeed as Talal Asad provocatively asks "what might an anthropology of secularism look like?" (2003, 1), one must also seek to find actually

[28] In terms of an analysis of state projects see Scott (1998).
[29] See Chakarbarty's essay "Translating Life-Worlds into Labor and History" in *Provinicializing Europe* (2000) in particular.

existing secularism.[30] Both the religious and the secular are imagined categories. They exist as active imaginaries that combine to form a particular subjectivity. In this ethnographic analysis imaginaries are understood as devices for constructing and maintaining what Zizek has called ideological fantasies (1989). These are the realms in which possibilities are imagined and framed as choices in reality. These are narrative structures that allow for a certain realization of forms of action that are themselves sedimented in mythological constructions of belief and possibility. Hence to probe the constructions of secular and religious categories of discourse is to assert a framing and potentiality of action within existing structures.

The Case of Pakistan: Islam and Modernity

In Ayesha Jalal's *Self and Sovereignty: Individual and Community in South Asian Islam since 1850* (2000), she traces the historical development of the concept of Islamic religious identity in South Asia. As she argues the category of Muslim was reconfigured in the shift from the colonial to the modern period. Hence religious identities, in their multiple forms, she argues is a central component to the experience of South Asia. Further, Jalal finds that the use of the explanatory categories of religious communalism or cultural nationalism to explain the articulations of Muslim identity in South Asia as

[30] Geertz cheekily forebode this in a footnote stating that some subtle Malinowski will bring the anthropology of religion to speed by writing a book called "Belief and Unbelief (or even 'Faith and Hypocrisy') in a Savage Society," in his essay 'Religion as a Cultural System,' (1973, 109, ftn 33). Here unbelief and hypocrisy is in reference to what he calls the anthropological study of religious noncommitment.

ultimately flawed. Indeed, the utility of such categories is a contextual strategy. As she concludes:

> the problem of difference in South Asia as a whole and of Muslim identity in particular cannot be addressed without forsaking the dichotomies between 'secular' and 'religious' as well as 'nationalism' and 'communalism'. Just as the first set of opposites can be found blending into the thought of a single individual, the second binary pair shares a common conception of majoritarianism and minoritarianism in the privileging of the religious distinction. The majoritarian premises of Indian and Pakistani 'nationalism' derive equally form the colonial project of religious enumeration. While Indian nationalism asserts its inclusionary idioms in the secular garb and Pakistani nationalism in an inclusionary religious mode, neither avoids the pernicious process of exclusion resulting from the implicit denial of difference. It is the singular and homogenizing agendas of both nation-states which have wittingly or unwittingly created the space for religious bigots seeking political power to target vulnerable minorities…That the dominant idioms of states, and the ways in which these are reflected in elite discourse, so often fly in the face of the shifting structural contours of politics at the base is reason enough for abandoning some of their more questionable premises. Exploding 'communalism' to uncover the manifold and contradictory interests driving the politics of South Asia might enable a better appreciation of difference as a lived cultural experience. (Jalal 2000, 575-6)

The place of communalism in debates in India as well as the issue of fundamentalism in Pakistan are caught between the categories of secularism and religion as Jalal argues. Undoing these categories is to also rethink the connection between the secular and religious in a spectrum of subjectivities. In the experience of South Asia, and Pakistan in particular, the idea of Muslim identity is complex and myriad. Indeed, a number of thinkers have heavily influenced the specific tradition of South Asian Islam from Muhammad Iqbal to Abu Ala Maududi.[31] Their philosophies and approach to exegesis in Islam must be contextualized to other thinkers of the Islamic tradition such as Ibn Khaldun, Ibn Rushd, Afghani, Qutb, and Shariati to name a few that grappled with the

[31] Iqbal's most immediate text important to this study is *The Reconstruction of Religious Thought*(1982). For a political analysis of Maududi's Jamaat-i-Islami see Nasr (1994).

issue of modernity. The influence of their thought in relationship to the development of the state in this argument requires a separate study.

For this analysis, it is imperative to think of how these narratives of primarily elite discourse shape the narratives of local subjectivities though the interaction and travel of labor migrants. Indeed, complex systems of religion and religious practice are at work in the Pakistani context. The state as it promotes and controls religious practices has also played an important part in the shaping of secularism and possibility of its practice. As I propose, a reading of labor migrant narratives through secular and religious discourse offers the possibility to recoup strategies for liberatory struggle. This requires complex readings of the state and the everyday practices of those who navigate these systems. Between the secular and the religious lies the ethnographic investigation of this research.

Chapter 2: Debt in a Time of Migration: History, Political Economy and Labor Migration

Introduction

This chapter argues for the place of transnational labor migrants understood as economic subjects of the state. The place of labor migration in relation to the economic development of the nation-state is an important site that connects the state to the discourse of neoliberalism. As an economic ideology of international financial institutions, economic subjects of the nation-state become transnational economic migrants. Economic migration, I argue, is interrelated to how the state perceives its role in labor migration. The state as an actor in these circumstances induces labor migration according to its relationship to the market reforms that are part of the neoliberal approach. Hence, there are multiple state effects that are created through the state itself and transstate institutions.

My concern of this chapter is the of writing of labor migration history and the tracking of transnational labor flows. As theorists of globalization argue, the process of migration is itself difficult to capture since it involves multiple sites and constant movement. Labor migration is in large part structured through a global political economy that offers insights into the relationship of labor to capital. Such a structure is also responsible for the production and patterns that labor migration follows. As I argue this is a systematic relationship to the historical context and effect of the larger schemes of

modernization and development. The second issue that is faced in the writing of labor migration history is one of methodology. To conduct this type of analysis, multi-sited research is an invaluable approach that tracks migratory movement. This involves a methodology that invests its thickness in a single subject in multiple places (Marcus 1995). It is at once a question of the archive, searching through official documents and bureaucratic tabulations, and of transforming migrant narratives into life-worlds.

Ethnographies of globalization in many ways owe a debt to political economy approaches, whether acknowledged or not. Indeed as many scholars of diaspora, international migration, and globalization argue, political economy analysis and commitment to political communities is increasingly dire.[1] As a way of entry into this discussion of the political economy of development and its relationship to labor migration, I examine the work of Gunnar Myrdal and the implications of his works *An American Dilemma* and *Asian Drama*.As a problem of ethnography, the connection of numerical data to issues of migration process are complicated by how labor migrants actually live and the narratives of working class life-worlds. As such I argue for a model of historical inquiry that examines structures and processes that are formative of global and local histories. This approach requires an investigation into the intellectual debates important to the practices of the state and policy institutions in terms of understanding how particular structures emerge. As such, Myrdal's influence in development economics offers insight into the role labor migration has played within the political economy of the nation-state. Further, I argue that such macroeconomic views are linked to the production

of labor migration flows and the local subjectivities of labor migrants. Pivotal to this argument is the place of labor migrant subjectivity understood as a life-world in which economic decisions and choices are structured by macroeconomic policies.

Transnational Labor History

The task of labor history is to chronicle worker narratives and experiences left out of the grand narratives of national histories. Labor history, in its intention, focuses on social change and the idea of progressive futures. Local histories of the workplace, labor, and their constitution in workers life-worlds offers insight into the processes and practices that constitute subject formation. In doing so the work of labor historians has tried to understand the relationship if workers interests as they are represented in cultural life. This move offers the insight of how subjectivities are made, unmade and remade.[2] E.P. Thompson's classic monograph *The Making of the English Working Class* (1966) embodies this concern of the labor historian to record the complexity and vibrancy of working class culture. What is remarkable about this work is the chronicling of cultural life in terms of secular and religious practices. For Thompson such practices were

[1] See for example the trenchant critique of Tölölyan (1996), and Gordon (1991) on the potential directions of activist research.

[2] Eric Hobsbawm (1984) offers an outline of the problematic of the labor historian in his collection of essays. Also, see Marcus and Fischer's (1986) essay "Taking Account of World Historical Political Economy: Knowable Communities in Larger Systems" for an important review of the overlap of ethnography, labor history and political economy. The relationship of political economy to globalization has also received a revitalized attention in anthropology in the last decade, see Alonso (1994), Kearney (1995), Nonini (2002).

constitutive to the creative acts of working class consciousness. The combination of these practices in his study demonstrated the minutiae of class consciousness.

Thompson's theory of class has received much attention from a wide range of critics.[3] His basic argument in the premise of *The Making* argued that class is relational, contingent and mediated. In short, for Thompson class is a historical relationship that happens (1966, 9). That is class as a category is a historical one, it is located in secular historical time. As such, the context for the formation of class revolves around the idea of consciousness. From this point of view class is actively made and constructed. Further, one can also argue the need for the place from which class is unmade and remade as a process of identity formation. That is, as certain elements of class are constructed others can be taken apart. Through this process of creation, this production of identity involves an accumulation and layering as well as loss. The flexibility of Thompson's ideas of class were symptomatic of how he approached his subject of study, that is the contradictory and complex world of workers cultural lives.

The simplicity of Thompson's class theory is complicated throughout his ethnographic text. The strength of his description is his account of the myriad world of worker subjectivity. Describing this process was far more important than its theorization for Thompson, as can be seen in the sheer difference between the short theoretical introduction and the lengthy historical ethnography. But more importantly for the concept of subjectivity, Thompson focuses on how workers interpret events rather than simply

[3] See William H. Sewell, Jr.'s essay "How Classes are Made: Critical Reflections on E.P. Thompson's Theory of Working-class Formation" in Kaye and McClelland (1990) for a critique and elaboration of Thompson's formulation of class.

how workers are constructed in historical events. This is important in thinking through the complex analysis of subjectivity. Multivocality is certainly now a necessary aspect of complex ethnographic work in anthropology. And as much as these narratives must be placed within structures of power, it is also important to note the vibrancy of debate and the many positions taken on issues. Hence, Thompson is able to combine theoretical concepts of structure and agency in his ethnographic descriptions that provide for a rich analysis of cultural change.

A different, yet similar, challenge remains in the current conjuncture of global capitalism as it is structured by the dictates of the Bretton Woods institutions. Globalization has transformed the world marketplace by the demands of capitalism. Within this system is the relationship of labor to capital that has intensified the mobility of both. The goal of economic globalization is the free movement of capital and the controlled management of its counterpart, labor. This movement across borders has created a massive pool of working-class migration that exists as a reserve army of labor of capitalism. What was once the domain of domestic and national labor pools is increasingly international and transnational.[4] The flexibility of capital and the use of technology creates the need for a transnational labor proletariat. The ease with which these labor diasporas are put to work has much to do with the lack of protection, much less existence, of international trade unions. Protections for labor migrants come in the form of stringent immigration laws that are prohibitive of such flows rather than

[4] Lisa Malkki (1994) argues that the international is a transnational cultural form. One might also see differences in usage as these concepts relate to the state. International as between states and transnational across states.

standardizing the industry of labor migration. As legal scholars of immigration law such prohibitions are largely politically motivated. The function of prohibition in immigration law is an ambiguous category of selective enforcement.

For labor history, globalization offers tough challenges in terms of making sense of workers lives. Recent ethnographic work has focused on globalization from a multi-sited perspective that emphasizes locality much in the way that Thompson did for the English working class.[5] But how does one make sense of these labor diasporas themselves — the process of movement, the making and unmaking of subjectivities, cultural capital etc. This essay makes a proposal for understanding the subjectivities of labor migrants through an analysis of the political economy of globalization and its relationship to cultural lives and subjectivities. By combining an argument of how development as a modernization project has created its own form of analysis, I offer an analysis of how economic development has influenced modes of subjectivity for labor migrants. This reading of development has to do with understandings of cultural identity and economic conditions, most specifically race and poverty. Further I offer a theory of class formation in the context of South Asia and through the process of labor migration.

Decades of Debt (More Than A Lifetime)

In the post war era the Bretton Woods institutions (International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) began with the promise of growth, prosperity and capital redistribution.

This was supplanted by neo-liberalism and its economic goals of structural adjustment, privatization and the freeing of economic markets and capital for corporate investment, much has changed. As is becoming increasingly clear, the economic project of globalization is far more complex and nuanced than policy-makers and economist would have us believe. Globalization in the economic guise of neo-liberalism is said to be the necessary ingredient to successfully achieve modernity. Modernity in this sense can only be achieved through a cocktail mixture of neo-liberal ideas of the economy and the market, and democratic principles of openness and freedom.[6] Modernity, of course, is multiple in its meanings. Yet dominant discourses surrounding neo-liberalism and its agenda obfuscate the transition from the variety of liberalism from which it grew. Within this macro-view of modernity is also the easily forgotten micro-level of everyday life. For many underdeveloped countries undergoing modernization, poverty is one of the central questions to address. As ethnographies of development have increasingly shown (e.g. Escobar 1995; Ferguson 1994; Gupta 1998) development projects fail to account for the upheaval they create in everyday life. Indeed, at the heart of such a dilemma is the difference between principle and practice. Development economists once brought the hope of liberalism and its implementation in the form of modernization to the third world. Such hope has become embodied into a system we now call globalization and neo-

[5] Some of the best recent work in Asian/Asian American studies is from the perspective of women in the global economy. See for example Chang (2000), Louie (2001), Parreñas (2001).

[6] The notion of the economy as a coherent domain is of recent origin that coincides with the launch of neo-liberal economics in the post-war era. See Mitchell (1998). Foucault made a similar argument in his "Governmentality" essay (1991, 99) in terms of the role of the state in the control of the 'economic' sphere in European history. In its origin, the economic sphere simply referred to the organization of the family controlled through the legal-juridical apparatus and other similar means of the state. As the state and the nation began to take shape in accordance with the modern conception of the relationship of the nation to the

liberalism. Early development approaches are now coupled with the logic of globalization as the mandate of international financial institutions such as the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The stated goal of such a program has long been to free capital and markets to create more capital while in the process creating enormous amounts of national debt in the third world. The consequence of such actions has created a world of proletarian diasporas following the pattern of labor chasing capital. For development economists, however, the emphasis has been inordinately on capital. Labor fleeing its indigenous locations is of little concern. This is not to say that such a pattern has not been noticed, but rather this is the pattern that is sought without regard to the consequences of such upheaval.

The shift to neo-liberal policies also saw a shift in approaches to the role of the state and state intervention. This turn from the model of the Keynesian welfare state to the capital market state reflected the ideological growth of neoliberal governmentality.[7] This was not just an ideological construction, it translated into material forms of control and governance. The social concerns of the state increasingly dissipated into the concerns of suprastate organizations and forms of transnational governmentality more concerned with controlling economic markets and capital. Governmentality, first conceived by Michel Foucault as:

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state, the economic sphere shifted in meaning. The family as a unit was broadened into the concept of populations that were to be controlled and coerced.

[7] For an insightful Gramscian analysis of the state in world politics see Augelli and Murphy (1993). On the concept of neoliberal governmentality see Ferguson and Gupta (2002). An early analysis of this shift comes in the work of Polanyi (1944) in which he argued that this shift from state to market depended on ideas of efficiency and progress. The market here is imagined as some kind of ideal space from which resources are properly allocated and the state and its interventions will only corrupt such processes.

> 1. The ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population, as its principle form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security.
>
> 2. The tendency which, over a long period and throughout the West, has steadily led towards the pre-eminence over all other forms (sovereignty, discipline, etc.) of this type of power which may be termed government, resulting, on the one hand, in the formation of a whole series of specific governmental apparatuses, and, on the other, in the development of a whole complex of *savoirs*.
>
> 3. The process, or rather the result of the process, through which the state of justice of the Middle Ages, transformed in the administrative state during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, gradually become 'governmentalized.' (1991, 102-103)

The various technologies of power shape populations through knowledge production connected to the state and its governmentality. Apparatuses of the state are then linked to political economy knowledges in a rationalized logic of the 'state of justice.' As these definitions suggest, Foucault maps governmentality in the experience of European history. The processes involved for the post-colonial state might be similar but their historicization differs since many of the major changes that occur for third world states take place in the mid to late twentieth century. Here I am specifically referring to the role of international financial institutions and the role they play in constructing populations through the political economy of power and government rationality. The era of decolonized states relied on national state intervention as a form of controlling the domestic economy. But under the economic policies of the IMF, for example, state intervention becomes a policy of global integration. Such a shift also marks a change in the constitution of state power. Far from being less significant, state power takes on new

tactics of regulation and control through these economic policies.[8] Indeed, to understand Foucault's idea of governmentality outside of the West, is to apply this concept as Western centers (states and suprastate apparatuses) conceive of them in non-Western locations. That is, governmentality as a rational of the state is an export item from the accumulated experiences of European and Western history. Neoliberal governmentality is then an extension of what is already an operational tactic. However, it adds a nuanced character to the global effect of governmentality. For international financial institutions that operate at the suprastate level, their role in managing economic success is one that was previously maintained primarily through state power. Here states are not only exerting influence over their own nations but on others as well, hence the impositions of imperial state power over others. The imperialism of the multinational age of capital is more visibly an empire in which a few nations dictate the affairs of others.[9]

This is apparent in the process of debt accumulation that now exists for third world countries. Debt and its relationship to transnational governmentality is one that leaves third world debtor states at the beck and call of the economic policies that serve the interests of northern countries. Debts accumulated through loans via neo-liberal policies are based on a history of state intervention. The theory of these policies is that they will create markets that will increase production and contribute to the global market

[8] For arguments that suggest the increasing insignificance of the nation state see Appadurai (1996) and Miyoshi (1993). These positions fail to see the complexity of diasporas and their histories located in oppression and alienation as a product of the state.

[9] This is not to say that military force is out of the question. Hardt and Negri's (2000) useful arguments on this point are misleading in arguing that modes of production and the basic working of capitalism has changed. Rather, the shift in apparent imperialism to a covert empire is part of the triumph of governmentality and its ability to enforce state power without calling it state action.

of goods. The history of such policies has been disastrous.[10] Rather than creating jobs such policies often contribute to the conditions of massive unemployment (Khan 1999). This in turn has created the need for large reserves of international labor and mass migrations of labor seeking opportunities in international markets. For long such labor migrations have remained on the peripheries of economic policy making. Primarily because the attention of such policy making has been at the level of the nation-state and more specifically the function of the state apparatus in creating suitable economic markets. These policies have ignored the palpable impact of these policies in the everyday lives of citizens of debtor countries. Again, this has much to do with the conceptual approach and the understanding of labor markets and labor migration. It is to this history which I now turn.

The Political Economy of Race and Poverty

Gunnar Myrdal holds an important place in the study of development and development economics. As much as he was a pioneer in these fields, he was also a theorist of modernity. As such he offers insight into the vision of modernity's relationship to the practices of modernization and development. Myrdal's work in his volumes on the United States and South Asia applied economic models to social problems. This development approach was the hallmark of his belief in the value of modernity. This same approach continued to be applied in these areas under regimes of neo-liberalism. It

[10] The classic work on debt accumulation is Susan George (1992) and the work of the Transnational

was his methodology that became the ideological narrative that connected liberal (in Myrdal's case a variant of progressive socialist) economics to the neo-liberalism of the international financial institutions that is the current dominant economic paradigm. The connection of Myrdal's development theories and those of neo-liberalism, is situated in the place of state intervention. Myrdal's theory of the state relied on the post-War conception of soft states and strong states.[11] A soft state is one that lacks in discipline and guidance. If the state is only enforced in this condition, efficiency will follow. As such the state will then be able to act for the benefit of its citizens through good governance. This involved shoring up state power and creating a certain order based in the discipline of the bureaucratic apparatus that holds the potential to solve the ills of its population. Strong states are further exemplified by a robust economy and efficiency.

Within this narrative of economic practices, development and state formation, lies an often ignored component – that of labor migration and the pursuit of a decent wage. This final point raises the issue of how subjectivities are constructed in development discourse. Statist approaches to development, progress, and growth target economic quality of life as an index of proper development and adequacy in terms of governance. But as I will argue the disjunctures of this approach can be read into the gaps of the theory of state intervention and structural adjustment. International labor migration is itself an obvious consequence of structural adjustment, but its rationality is not. Nor is it a

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Institute based in Amsterdam.

[11] See also the work of Rudolph and Rudolph (1984) for a combination of this state theory with a culturalist model.

central component of development schemes. Yet it is integral to the struggling economies of working class South Asians that are the economic subjects of these policies.

The publication of Myrdal's work had a profound and widespread impact. *An American Dilemma: The Negro Problem and Modern Democracy*[12] published in 1944 became mandatory reading for scholars of race in the US. Indeed it was used and cited in landmark civil rights cases.[13] *Asian Drama: An Inquiry into the Poverty of Nations*, published in 1968, was less well received. Myrdal's influence in South Asia was perhaps not as prevalent as in the US, but was nonetheless important.[14] Important critiques of his methodology attacked his universalistic approach as ethnocentric (Geertz 1969), and also questioned Myrdal's liberalism in constructing these dilemmas (Wallerstein 1989). [15] Myrdal's somewhat simplistic adherence to the values of the Enlightenment is an easy target of criticism. The critique of the ethnocentrism of Enlightenment values and their application in development and modernization does not change the fact that this approach was a highly influential model for many countries to follow. Nor does it contemplate the fraught histories of collision and fusion that result from these forced marriages of societal

[12] The over 1400 page tome was also issued in a condensed version with the subtitle *The Negro in America*.
[13] See Baker (1998), Jackson (1990), and Southern (1994). The use of *American Dilemma* in policy had a huge impact on the role of social science. As Lee Baker argues Myrdal engaged with the Howard school of race scholars, many of which were influenced be the Chicago school of sociology, most prominently Robert Park and Franz Boas' cultural anthropology (1998, 176-187). Here much of the thinking on race was on the 'negro problem.' Park was also heavily invested in resolving the 'oriental problem.' See Yu (2001) and Palumbo-Liu (1999).
[14] On the role of Myrdal's development theories in India see Harriss (1998). Although Harriss focuses on India and Indian development economists, a similar influence can be found in most of South Asia. Myrdal's study focuses mostly on India in terms of countries in the subcontinent. His dismissal of Pakistan relies on his belief that Pakistan lacked in personality and individuality (Myrdal 1968, 232). This may seem like his theories favored India, however, elsewhere in a strange footnote Myrdal makes the claim that Pakistanis blend better with Westerners whereas upper class (high caste?) Hindus appear unsophisticated, introverted, tense, and "lacking in humor and the simple graces of togetherness" (331). The cultural racism of such claims is apparent, yet it complicates other of Myrdal's obvious biases.

and cultural change. To be sure, there is a modernist condescension in Myrdal's ability to name dilemmas and dramas. But it is not only the ethnocentricity of his values that is under attack, the application of these values and the mechanisms through which modernizing countries integrate them according to the context of their particular histories remains a controversial topic.

Myrdal's belief in state social engineering led him to take up massive studies in the US to solve the problem of race, and in South Asia to resolve the issue of poverty. His methodology remained resolute and changed little from situation to situation. Part of his fascination with the US and South Asia was to apply the same principles to entirely different situations. This period from the research completed in *American Dilemma* (1944) and *Asian Drama* (1968) marked the height of Myrdal's exploratory work on the international scene.[16] His models of social engineering were based on state intervention and the problem of distribution. His belief in social democracy led his argument in *American Dilemma* to see the US racial problem as centrally about economic inequality and access. This was then applied to the context of *Asian Drama* in which the racial clash between whites and blacks was replaced with the context of international struggle between advanced rich countries and poor ones (Jackson 1990, 332). For Myrdal these class division were the main problem that threatened the future of the world. But it

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[15] Apparently a third *AD* under the working title of *African Damnation* was never written because of Myrdal's growing cynicism and political scandals.

[16] This is reflected in the collected essays on the Myrdals entitled *Models, Modernity and the Myrdals* edited by Kettener and Eskova (1997). The book begins with an essay by Walter Jackson entitled "Gunnar Myrdal, Social Engineering, and American Racial Liberalism," and ends with the sole essay on Myrdal's work in South Asia in the collection with a similar title by Timo Kyllönen "Gunnar Myrdal, *Asian Drama* (1968) and Development Studies."

similarly displayed his simplistic ability to interpret two different forms of hierarchy, race and class, as based on the same principle.

Myrdal's emphasis on state intervention as a central component to achieving the progressive and liberalist aims of his economic theories, although simplistic from certain angles, opens up interesting point of conversation. In *Asian Drama* his contention that Pakistan's major dilemma over formation of the state lay in the struggle between religious and secular nationalism frames the debate over development in Pakistan. Grappling with modernity and its meaning in Pakistan is centrally about this debate (see Chapter 1). Yet, he claimed that Pakistan as a soft state had the commitment to modernization, but lacked in will and social discipline of its people. Such statements deserve further analysis into his rationale. Indeed, Myrdal in using state theories, often espoused myths of the lazy native and culture of poverty theories to explain the failure of the state. Myrdal's argument was similar in the context of US race relations. In this case there was a strong state but weak people. The force of the argument in *American Dilemma* placed the burden of the problem of race as one of poverty. The solution was to come from the realization of elite whites that this could not be maintained.

This is the basic pattern of Myrdal's theories. It was up to elites in the state to change things for the betterment of their respective countries. For positive progress to occur, redistribution has to occur at the societal level at the behest of the state. The role of the state is to then manage the crises of the populace.[17] This state theory relied on

[17] Following a similar policy orientation, the Harvard school of economists involved in advising the Pakistan government argued that Pakistan's economic growth was a result of carefully planned state intervention, see Papanek (1967).

Myrdal's brand of economics that saw the idea of socialism as a term for modernization (1968, 808). This seemingly odd definition is the ideological framework from which he approached the promise of technological modernization. He recognized that technological innovation of economies was inevitable and desirable. For him such changes would need to focus on the redistribution of resources primarily through state intervention. Modernization of societies, for Myrdal, is a function of the state. What is important though in his approach is his pairing of the economic with the social and the political. For redistribution to occur at the economic level, the organization of societies and cultural practices had to be changed.

For Myrdal there was much to be cautious about in theories of modernization as they impacted society and social relationships. Moreover, he was an ardent believer in national economies that were self-reliant. In the case of soft states in South Asia, this meant guarding against the rapid industrialization of national economies and the displacement of the peasantry through technologies of agricultural production. Rightly, his reasoning argued that this would create massive levels of rural-urban migration and large amounts of undereducated and unemployed reserves. As a policy manual *Asian Drama* did not shy away from predicting the outcomes of such policies. Myrdal was scathing in his attacks on modernization theorists who argued that the social consequences of such rapid changes were a necessary consequence of modernity. Instead, Myrdal argued a position of self-reliance and social responsibility that argued for the ethical position that the state maintain the welfare of its people.

But Myrdal was self-conscious of theories of modernization and their impact. He was well aware that his suggestions were not always heeded, much less possible given the complicated situations he was advising. In this context Myrdal is surprisingly glib when it comes to the future of labor migration from South Asia. Myrdal and his associates argued that labor migration would be of no consequence for the future development of South Asia and had relegated the issue to one of their appendices(see Appendix 11, 'Notes on Migration,' 2139-2149). This was primarily based on his approach to modernization that would benefit indigenous populations and the prospects of closed populations.[18] Here he referred to the stringent immigration polices enacted by many Northern countries after the First World War to control their populations and growth.[19] They further argued that if any migration was to take place it would happen in the educated professional classes, of which such migrations would be insignificant (Myrdal 1968, 1459-1462).

Contrary to modernization theorists who called for the mechanization of commercial agriculture to create a reserve labor force and urban migration from the countryside, Myrdal called for a strengthening of local agricultural production and a disciplining of the work ethic to maintain domestic economies. This argument aligned itself with postcolonial demands for national self-determination but also made evident Myrdal's inclination toward culture of poverty theories. This was at the time the dominant paradigm in certain circles of development. The justification of mechanization

[18] This did not prevent them from making the bizarre suggestion that migration could also act as a substitute for birth control and hence ease the problems of population growth (Myrdal 1968, 2147-2148).

was often based on ideas of the lazy peasantry rather than an understanding of how technology influenced social relationships (Scott 1977; 1985). But instead of embracing this complex concept of sociality, Myrdal argued in favor of disciplining working populations towards greater production and growth. The broad strokes of Myrdal's economic theory resisted the idea of a uniform capitalist system that is the predominant thinking of current globalization thinking. Instead his approach relegated the interconnectedness of the capitalist system, and the dominance of Northern economies over Southern ones, as more of a nuisance to progress. In his vision, national economies could become robust without external intervention. Indeed, in terms of World Bank aid he agreed with the premise that multilateral aid should supersede bilateral aid in the interest of creating multiple political relationships (Myrdal 1968, 682). This tacit agreement was to foreshadow the current economic dilemmas that many debtor countries face today. This particularly evident in terms of how bilateral and multilateral aid from international financial institutions have shaped the global economy.

Logically, Myrdal and his associates argued that international migration would play no major role in the South Asian economies if states were to follow his advice of strong state intervention resulting in robust national economies. In his model of strong national economies, there would be no need for migration if jobs were made available domestically.[20] But even as they did, international migration began to take on a new

[19] Myrdal again surprisingly misses the working class labor migrations from South Asia to the UK after the Second World War. *Asian Drama* published in 1968 also came on the cusp of the important 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act in the US that drew in large professional class migrations.
[20] This is still the predominant argument of economic advisors to the Government of Pakistan many of which have been in and out of positions in the World Bank and the IMF. As the state continues to rely on international aid it simultaneously makes a domestic argument of national self-reliance.

significance that many South Asian states were slow in recognizing. The oil economies of nearby Gulf countries demanded cheap labor from surplus reserves, of which South Asians were the closest. Myrdal had completely failed to see migration as a vastly important source for capital and labor flows to and from South Asia. Given Myrdal's ideological world-view this is understandable. But there was also a darker side to this miscalculation. The state interventionist approach divorced of Myrdal's progressive beliefs in redistribution and self-determination have become the mainstay of the economic regiments imposed by the structural adjustment of international financial institutions. Petrodollars from oil-rich Gulf countries also helped this shift from redistribution to debt management through the neo-liberal conception of globalization and the state. The influx of capital into the Gulf countries and its rise as an oil power in the 1970s via OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Counties) laid the ground work to accelerate greater centralized control of the global economy (Augelli and Murphy 1993, 134). This was garnered by American interests in the oil-production of Gulf countries and indirect control of Gulf states.[21] This also followed massive waves of labor migration to Gulf countries in building, construction and eventually to fill positions in the service economy.

For sender countries, labor migration is a tactic to ease the problems created through underemployment, unemployment and the surplus of labor created through rural-urban shifts. Although the link between unemployment and migration seems an obvious one by now, structural adjustment policy-makers have little interest. This is not to say

[21] On the racist orientation of the US-Saudi corporate relationship see Vitalis' (2002) compelling history.

that structural adjustment has nothing to do with migration, for policy makers it is simply not the central issue.[22] The unit for development economists in the world of structural adjustment is the nation-state. Maintaining the integrity of the nation-state requires a particular understanding of the market in economics. This is the market of the domestic economy that relies on imports and exports and the production of commodities. The attitude of structural adjustment policy-makers is that the movement of people is merely a by-product of market economies adjusting to standardization. This is of course jargon for years of economic displacement and debt accumulation becoming the burden of working people. Decades of loans in the name of development have resulted in higher unemployment and less opportunities for South Asian workers (see for example Khan 1999). The obvious conclusion then, in the face of stifled life chances in home countries, is the attraction of working abroad.

Gunnar Myrdal and his associates enter into this logic through the noble agenda of eradicating poverty. And indeed many of the measures they examined looked to the effects of the demise of agricultural production and the peasant classes through the Green Revolution in South Asia. Here economic categories take on social and cultural effects. As economist S. Akbar Zaidi states, the Green Revolution in Pakistan, and for much of South Asia for that matter, was a major watershed in the mid 1960s that led to major

[22] Both the World Bank and the IMF have carried out various and sundry evaluations of labor migration on national economies. See for example Borjas (1999) and Russell and Teitelbaum (1992). But as my interviews with administrators for the World Bank in Pakistan demonstrated, such awareness does not imply any interest. This was the uniform response of the economists and policy makers I interviewed. Their explanation of this was not that migration was unrelated, but that it was intentionally ignored. The value of remittances, social and economic capital is of course of unestimable economic value in terms of rural and urban life in Pakistan. The Pakistani state has for long taken remittances quite seriously since it directly benefits from them.

transformations in ‘economic groups and classes, political affiliation, and even culture.’ (1999, 21) The social and economic upheaval created by these agricultural changes led to an enormous surplus in labor reserves. This was much in line with modernization theorists that argued for the necessity of such changes. The result in Pakistan did not however lead to the massive growth of industrialization. Instead large pools of labor were left without adequate jobs, training and opportunities. Beginning in the 1970s and the advent of petrodollars to Gulf countries, South Asian labor migration to the Middle East became a major venue of outsourcing. Large construction contracts in Gulf region countries such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, Qatar, Bahrain, and to a lesser extent North African countries such as Egypt and Libya were attracting skilled and unskilled workers by the droves. For example it is estimated that in 1981 the Pakistani population in the Middle East was some 1,414,000 (Gilani 1985, 29). These numbers were to ebb and flow throughout the 80s and to the early 1990s when the Gulf war caused many workers to abandon their contracts and to head home.

Many workers as they went abroad were looking to payoff debts back home and to eventually continue with their lives making money to allow them to get married, pay for homes, purchase land etc. This in turn created a migratory relationship to work, travel and home that has now become commonplace. With no other alternatives in home countries beholden to international debt, migrants travel the world seeking work at a steady pace and wage. From the Middle East to East Asia to Australia to the migration to Europe and North America, Pakistanis and South Asians have formed a modern day labor diaspora. Myrdal in the thinking of the 1960s failed to predict this from happening. This

was partially a consequence of their development approach that was ahistorical and full of the biases of overemphasizing the state and its elite. This agenda of Myrdal's that was fixed on the strategies of economic planning and interventionist policies of the nation-state failed in pursuing the regional and eventual global consequences of such modernization. Indeed, Myrdal was aware of the dangers of modernization but his economic strategies did little to stave them off.

The intellectual history that took Myrdal from *An American Dilemma* to *Asian Drama* needs a bit more resuscitation. This strand of intellectual thinking reflected an idea of modernity that viewed difference in a particular way. In the legacy of anthropological ideas, Myrdal's work repackages the culture of poverty thesis such that the idea of pathological cultures can also be understood as stunted economies. And much in the way that the logic of structural adjustment has led to massive debt accumulation in the third world, the theories of Myrdal were blind to the ways in which working people are forced to stave off poverty in the search of a better life. Indeed the policies of structural adjustment imposed by the World Bank on countries such as Pakistan has much in common with Myrdal's understanding of the dramas that plague Asia. In the work of Gunnar Myrdal is to be read a theory of modernity, of how the practice of development economics might have worked out, yet failed so miserably largely in part through Myrdal's ethnocentric assumptions. Such predispositions are based in conceptions of race and class that are still prevalent in economic policy making, as well as transnational discourses of identity formation. What is clear though, is that in the face of failing development, those seeking the experience of modernity will go elsewhere.

Local addresses

In the Introduction to Donnan and Werbner's edited volume *Economy and Culture in Pakistan: Migrants and Cities of a Muslim Society* (1991), they argued in favor of social analysis that goes beyond the local community toward a global view. For anthropologists this argument has gained wide acceptance. But the reality on the ground is quite different. Their arguments stemmed from the realization that their field sites had fundamentally changed and that cultural analysis had to follow suit. By the beginning of the 1990s it was clear that almost every aspect of social life in Pakistan was directly affected by migration and urbanization. Their rationale, following theories of modernity was that as life speeds up and the search for economic opportunities increases, movements of populations at a mass scale create new and unique circumstances, albeit temporary ones. Culture itself is forced to adapt and change at a rapid pace.

Their argument was composed in a typically anthropological way. To begin with, ethnographic research on Pakistani migration has followed a fairly traditional, in terms of discipline, path by focusing on local social structures and stratification. Indeed this research has rightly asked questions about kinship, family, biraderi, religion, social organization, and at times class and gender. But with the comings and goings of the migrant into the anthropological imaginary a simple question of everyday life becomes something quite different. What do these categories mean to migrants who might transgress these boundaries while perhaps still maintaining them? Communities are

obviously changing in fundamental ways, for the definition of community is now at stake. For much of the home country migration research in Pakistan these questions have examined family structure and home life to understand how going away changes such everyday lived experiences. Economic conditions and the reorganization of social life is the model on which much of this literature is based.

Emphasis on how economic conditions are created needs to be explored further. Certainly, these are issues that have been discussed in the migration literature (see for example Addleton 1992; Amjad 1989; Levebvre 1999). Yet the source of this material has more often than not been based on the study of one locale. The relationship of different field sites needs to be understood and multiple communities and levels of community should be compared. The failed agricultural schemes and the mistakes of decades of debt have led to the rural-urban shifts and out-migration of the poorest areas of Pakistan primarily from the Punjab and North West Frontier Province. And even though there is the push of poverty, underdevelopment is another barrier. It is clear that large amounts of labor displacement occurred through the effects of the Green Revolution. But the fact of underdevelopment, that is access to education, salaried and wage work, certain governmental facilities, has also much to do with where particular opportunities are made available. Specifically the availability of such facilities is clearly greater in certain provinces than they are in others.[23]

[23] As a side note, both institutionally and symbolically such material circumstances translate into an index of ethnicity and race that has much to do with the legacy of colonial theories of the martial races, in terms of Punjabis and Pashtos in their abilities as workers and warriors.

On the other side of the agenda, migration research has prominently examined immigrant life in host countries on the premise that return to a home country seems unlikely. Here we engage with ideas of identity and the cultural politics of home and away. The relatively established fields of migration research and studies of race and ethnicity are fully engaged in these pursuits. The study of diaspora as the connection of host and home countries offers the challenge of analysis of migratory communities in multiple sites.

Out of these two streams of host and home research emerges a third link: the passage. How is it that migrants, economic, political and otherwise, make their way to a destination? This is not only a question of logistics – was it a ship, was it a plane, which flight, which documents, which smuggler, how much money – but also of a frame of mind. It is a certain consciousness and practice of social capital. At the core it is about work, labor and making money. It is about putting forms of knowledge to use in the act of migration and migrant subjecthood. Out of this narrative of seeking a better life is also a narrative of expectation and the anticipation of certain prospects: the proverbial golden dream of making it in the fantasy of the lone superpower the United States. Internal to this is a critique of the limitations of labor chasing capital across the globe that is also a vital element to a discourse of workers rights and entitlements. A discourse of economic freedom of which I will say more in the next section. Out of these research objectives, arises the necessity of mutli-sited research. Indeed, the role of the ethnographer is put to the test of relevancy in the approach to research. To track economies and migrants, the

ethnographic eye is taken to places outside of what is formally known as a community and into broader formations of globalization and transnationalism.

Paul Gilroy's work in *The Black Atlantic* (1993) argues for a diasporic formation that spans several continents and multiple locations. Such an approach is instrumental in this research. For working-class South Asians in the migration circuits of globalization their subjectivity is complex and multiple. Indeed, as I have argued through the example of the development economics of Gunnar Myrdal, as economic subjects of the state and the global economy, labor migrants form social and cultural relationships through the experience of migration. In this regard, recent ethnographic work into the historical place of such workers has aided important insights into the subterranean worlds of labor migrants. Donald Nonini in a special issue of *Critical Asian Studies* (2002) outlines the importance of studying regimes of globalization and transnational migrants. In an earlier essay. Nonini (1997) investigated the new cosmopolitan subjectivities of Malaysian Chinese as they navigate the opportunities of the global economy such as smuggling, labor contracting and trade. This research follows this similar trajectory and provides a detailed ethnography of these practices. Nonini's project provides the insight of comparative processes of migration for transnationals and the shifting modes of subject formation and identity. On the US side, Peter Kwong's book *Forbidden Workers* (1997) is a historical study that offers important comparative details for this project. As an expose he chronicles the ways in which Chinese migration to the US is created and sustained through particular conditions in both of these countries.

Aihwa Ong's work on the cultural logics of transnationalism (1999) provides the most sustained ethnographic examination. In this wide-ranging study Ong investigates the complexity of transnational through a structural argument to understand strategies of migration and capital accumulation. In large part, her investigation explores capital wealthy transnationals as they reconfigure ideas of family, identity, and work. Indeed, this study offers an understanding of what she calls flexible citizenship and the regimes under which such strategies of human action flourish. The importance of this concept to this work is that it offers a conception of cosmopolitanism for elites that differs for those of the working-classes. As an ideological structure, however it combines the interests of these groups in the unified desire for capital accumulation and economic opportunity. The difference then is in the flexibility, that is the navigation of systems of migration of nation-states. As I argue in Chapter 4, citizenship is tied to concepts of illegality and framed within debates on migration. As such, this relationship is important to the construction of labor migrant subjectivity in the translation of an economic subject into social and cultural relationships. This aspect of subjectivity is a particular experience of sociality.

Across nations migrants take with them their identities and understandings of sociality. Through work and the experience of migrancy is produced a story of subjecthood. A tale of citizenship to the world, but not only a cosmopolitan kind typically relegated to those of the professional classes who bring the privileges of a certain kind of education to the new world, but of a working class offering their bodies as collateral to make enough to send home remittances to their families and loved ones. Travel is a

stepladder from which ones departure is from South Asia, with a layover in the Middle East or East Asia, with a final destination to Europe and more so toward the economic might of the United States. Legality becomes an issue in containing bodies for their brawn over their social lives and history. The documents and status of the immigrant is a state of transition in which one is received, and importantly conceived.

An important aspect of locality and translocality, that is how places, ideas, and cultures travel, is the formation of identities. To return to the model of Gunnar Myrdal's economy of culture, race and class concepts are the world in which migrants enter in transnational circuits. Certainly, hierarchy and differentiation is nothing new to them, but it is to the new concepts of identification and interpellation that they must adjust. To this world of race and class must be added the significant dimension of gender. That a majority of working class Pakistani migrants are male, and often reconceptualize their communities in terms of bachelor societies is of great significance.[24] How these concepts of identity are employed in the context of migration is of vast importance to understanding transnational labor history. This is also a question of context. What I have thus far argued is that political and social identities are placed within economic contexts. Indeed for macroeconomic policy makers, migrants are economic subjects with little agency. Their lives are manufactured and structured through loans, market policies and state interventions. In large part this is true, but much more color has to be painted into

[24] This phenomenon of officially sanctioned male migrants has been carefully crafted by the Pakistani state weary of losing the honor of its women. This follows the example of most other South Asian countries with large pools of women in the transnational workforce that are subject to mistreatment. Only recently have female migrants been allowed passage mainly as professional class workers (accountants, IT, doctors, etc.)

this canvas. Indeed, much is to be learned from the subjectivities of labor migrants as they navigate globalization.

Labor to Work: The Hidden Working-Class

In the world of race and class are examples of labor diasporas traversing the world. In early November 2000 I was sitting with a elderly Punjabi gentleman at a teastand in Islamabad. We had gotten to know each other through our chance encounters. He was now driving a taxi to make a living and had also spent some 20 years working abroad in the Gulf and Europe. We were discussing the news of the day when he began to talk about the hypocrisy of politicians. I asked him what he thought about all of the loans the Pakistani government had been taking from the World Bank and the IMF. To him these sources of money were a way to line the pockets of corrupt political leaders. The debts that created from these loans becomes the burden of normal citizens, he argued. People in Pakistan found it hard to make a living without opportunities for employment, so they go abroad to make a little money. He was clearly exasperated by this situation arguing that there was not much anyone could do accept maintain a faith in Islam. When I asked him what he meant he replied through ethical reasoning of Islam that condemned political corruption. He continued to not only critique politicians but Muslim leaders that were equally corrupt from his point of view for going along with the corrupt practices of the government.

This analysis revealed the many layers of the situation transnational labor migrants find themselves in. On the one hand they are citizens of a nation-state that does not provide access to the life-chances necessary to maintain a living. In the process of debt accumulation by the state, workers are forced to find capital elsewhere. This complex negotiation itself is informed by a set of ethical responses to such a situation. This form of religious and secular reason in which the workings of the state are viewed through the ethical lens of Islamic discourse is part of labor migrant consciousness. It is a form of agency in a highly structured world that bars opportunity and access. For labor migrants, this agency propels them into multiple migration circuits simultaneously as a citizen of a nation, in this case Pakistan, and as economic migrants seeking capital abroad. This history of transnational migration is intimately linked to the relationship between Pakistan and the United States. For as was apparent in my interviews with transnational labor migrants in Pakistan, the US represents a certain kind of access to capital not otherwise available. The US is a particular location of transnational labor migrations returns us to the narratives of Myrdal and his ideas of development.

Out of the history of post 1965 migration to the US, that saw an unprecedented boom in immigrants from many Asian countries, emerges a specific telling prominent in the story of US race relations. It revolves around a new American dilemma, the myth of the model minority. From this narrative we are told that Asian Americans are hard-working, disciplined, go-getters with at times family values that are near in composition to the Protestant ethic. As a racial wedge between other people of color, Asian Americans are the model for the machinations for racial capitalism. The prize of Asians as honorary

whites has created a confusing picture of the complexity that is Asian America. Lost are the stories of working class immigrants and resistance to structural oppression. In the discourse of the model minority as it relates to race and ethnicity, the disappearance of working class narratives has been an effective tool in maintaining economic inequality. In hiding immigrant working class resistance, the use of the model minority takes on truth-effects that change the terms of poverty. The logic of individual rights and bootstraps theories are taken to their extreme to the point where poverty is simply a state of mind. We are told that the model minority is an entrepreneurial class rather than a working class. The point of analysis is not only one of terms, but one of how to understand the changing nature of work and labor.

The tragic events of September 11th have brought out these contradictions in phenomenal ways. Firstly, the national conscious has become aware of a sizable Arab American and Muslim American community. The issue of immigration policy has been turned on its head with greater scrutiny of brown skinned peoples. And one need not be a Muslim or of Arab origin to feel the brunt of this gaze. This is amply attested for in the numerous racist attacks on victims of mistaken identity: Sikhs, Hindus, Latinos, and countless others who looked like they do not belong.

For many economic migrants handcuffed by documents and the pursuit of capital, their placement into US race relations can be startling. When the dramas of Asia enter the dilemmas of America we are reminded of the struggle of the labor migrant. What Myrdal mistook as a problem in the conception of the poor – that is poverty as a state of mind – is more effectively a different kind of cultural struggle that eluded culture of poverty

theorists. Imbricated within the modernity of migration is a discourse of freedom. An articulation of cultural and social rights in a world shaped by the structures of capitalism. This discourse of freedom is a product of modernity itself. It declares the aspirations for a different world promised through the act and sacrifice of migration. Indeed the working classes are now searching the globe for capital and more importantly the right of social justice.

In the days after 9-11 anthropologists are challenged with new dilemmas. There is clearly a new sophistication in the management of US immigration taking place that involves new technologies of state control and coercion. The integrity of civil liberties and democratic values are on trial. With the number of detentions into the thousands, with some released and others unaccounted for, and massive investigations continuing with communities judged by the color of the skin or their place of worship. I am reminded of Mohammed Rafiq Butt a Pakistani immigrant who died of heart failure in detention on Oct. 25, 2001. He was picked up like many Muslims following the attacks because he was unable to provide adequate documents. When asked for his identification he provided his passport showing he had overstayed his visa. With no knowledge useful to the federal authorities he was on his way to deportation. I wonder what issues of justice he sought in his life. I think of the fright that he must have faced in the crisis and moral panic. I wonder if he had dreams and what they might have been. I also think of the strange twists of healing. Of how a communities introduction into the national consciousness takes place through tragedy. Of how racial violence, taunting, the destruction of property and the fear of communities are oddly intertwined in creating new

popular representations. Yet, the question remains of whether justice in the end will prevail.

These tales of migrancy are but one facet of a growing working-class diaspora that spans the globe. Through this movement a cosmopolitan subjectivity is constructed that must negotiate concepts of capital in its many shapes and forms. As identities are made, unmade, and remade, class and race concepts are gaining new currencies. The work of Pnina Werbner (1990; 1996; 1998; 1999) demonstrates this complexity in Pakistani diasporas. Her work highlights some of the theoretical issues that this ethnography interrogates in understandings of capital, political imaginaries, cosmopolitanism, and transnational religious movements. Emerging out of these concepts are discourse of race and class concepts that are constantly shifting and taking on new meaning. Tracing these patterns through South Asia to the Middle East, Europe and North America, this project outlines how new diasporas from Pakistan are taking shape. Through the economic discourse of globalization, social and cultural lives continue to create new meanings.

Crafting Subjects

Certainly economic theories have played their part in the lives of labor migrants. Structural adjustment is not only about capital markets, it is about labor markets and their transnational flows. As capital takes shape into commodities through the global landscape, what happens to labor? Does it take shape in the commodification of work?

What do the life-worlds of labor migrants look like? It is to these questions that I apply my ethnographic analysis. Beyond subjects of economic policies are the adjustments and the manipulations that craft subjectivities in the experience of labor migration.

As a tentative theory of class formation it is instrumental to think of how working class narratives enter the realm of modernity, transnationalism, capitalism and globalization. These secular narratives are themselves connected to religious narratives that maintain identity and cultural worlds. These are important narratives in the categories of identity in the transnational worlds of labor migrants.

Chapter 3: Traffic in the Diaspora: An Ethnographic History of South Asian Labor Migrants

Introduction

> On 5 August 1972 Idi Amin informed his country that "Asians came to Uganda to build the railway. The railway is finished. They must leave now." The state shortly thereafter expelled 50,000 Asians. We tend to remember this act only as an example of Idi Amin's heinousness, and we forget the hand of the British, who did two things: They created the idea that desis are only temporary workers whose culture is so transient that they can only make their lives in their homeland, and second, they made it very difficult for the Asians to enter Britain (whose "Commonwealth" was shown to be an utter sham by this episode). The social being of the desi is structured by this imperial racism.
>
> Vijay Prashad "Of a *Girmit* Consciousness," in *The Karma of Brown Folk*, 100-101.

This chapter is a historical ethnography of the states relationship to the labor migrant industry of Pakistan. It elaborates the system of state control in the migration process by comparing practices of 19th century indentured labor to contemporary labor migration. As a description of the current migration industry in Pakistan, it explores the dimensions of how labor migration is patterned and produced in relationship to the state. As I argue, the contemporary migration industry is structured through a historical relationship to practices in the indentured period. This can be seen in the history of the role of the state to migration, particularly in the bureaucratic and legal institutions developed to control migration such as recruitment agencies and the crafting of immigration laws. This is particularly important to the formation and struggle over labor contracts that is the essential agreement between employer and worker in the negotiation of wage work. Thus,

this chapter argues for a historical reading of the states relationship to transnational labor migration through a comparison of the colonial and postcolonial period.

There is a long history of South Asian labor migration that links the experience of indentured labor migration of the 19th century to the current patterns of contractual international migration. Indentured labor filled the gap created out of the abolition of slavery in the Western world by the British in 1836 and in the US by 1865. This labor migration of indenture was constitutive of a particular diasporic experience. In this essay I argue that the current pattern of international labor migration follows a set of general practices that are genealogically related to the experience of indentured labor. Further the conditions of contemporary contract labor migration in many ways parallel those of colonial indentured migrations. This is in contrast to the suggestion by some writers that colonial indentured migration be understood as separate from postcolonial migrations from South Asia (Ghosh 1989, Mishra 1996).[1] From the standpoint of political economy, the relationship of these two histories can be connected through the imperial goals of empire-building. During the colonial period this was a position that depended on direct capitalist expansion and economic exploitation into new markets. In the postcolonial era, empire-building maintains the capitalist mode of production and the further expansion of capitalist market logic through the indirect controls of international financial institutions

[1] Mishra makes the important distinction between diasporas of exclusion under imperial and colonial control and diasporas of border during the postcolonial era (Mishra 1996). The difference in these eras is between regimes of state control and the emphasis of how this influences identity formation. This is a useful distinction when comparing the professional diasporas that have migrated to the US and UK for example, but ignores the complexity of the working class migrations currently taking place from South Asia. It also fails to articulate the changing role of state control and analysis of power over historical time.

and military intervention.[2] Transnational labor migration in the current historical conjuncture is a product of such a logic. Empire is the political means of control in the economic world of globalization.

The parallels of indentured migration and current contract migration require a structural analysis of their historical linkages. These two forms of migration in many ways share a similar pattern of state regulation and control. Contemporary international migration labor is a voluntary form of migration marked by the use of contractual agreements between employer and worker. The use of contracts in the contemporary era, and in some cases the standardization of this contract, relies on a logic of state regulation that begin with 19th century indentured labor. These contracts are generally a wage agreement that sets the terms of work and payment. Recruitment is an essential aspect of contemporary labor migration that is structurally shaped through colonial practices of information and knowledge collection of colonized indigenous communities. This is to say that the Orientalist practices of colonial ethnology inform current labor recruitment and patterns of labor migration. Recruitment in the contemporary pattern is also of two kinds as it was in the colonial era: one, a state sanctioned legal practice, and the other an extra-state sanctioned illegal practice. Additionally, labor migration in both eras was envisioned as non-permanent, fixed labor, with the expectation that contact workers would be repatriated upon completion of their services. Labor migrants are often maintained as non-permanent residents through legal policies of the state that regulate and enforce this status. Such a status is not easily maintained, however, and legal status

[2] Hardt and Negri make this connection in their arguments about the changing nature of empire and modes

constantly shifts through a mixture of selective enforcement and the pressures on many countries to develop a semi-permanent reserve labor force. Hence, migrants are often encouraged to prolong contracts or to go from contract to contract creating a community of workers whose status is uncertain. International boundaries are then porous in this legal sense of nation-state sovereignty. This explains the logic of the state in controlling migration through access to the rights of citizenship, and at other points changing its position because of migrant struggles and protest.

The experience of indenture relied on the accumulative set of regulations that emerged from the 19th century history of the South Asian diaspora. Many of the current legal codes and state processes of selection are based in the genealogies of these experiences. Recruitment itself and the preferences for workers based in particular national and ethnic groups are generated through the discourses of race, class and gender established in the colonial era. These discourses remain today in a modified form. What is apparent in these similar patterns, however, is that although some of the dynamics of labor migration have changed, the general structural apparatus is the same. This reflects the relations of power that are in place for labor migrants in a state system that seeks to control labor and capital.

Through these historical periods of South Asian diaspora, there has developed a way of being that Vijay Prashad has called a girmit consciousness (2000). This is derived from the agreement (girmit) that South Asian workers (girmitiya) in Fiji signed to return to their homelands upon completion of their tour of duty during the colonial period of

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of production when discussing its relationship to transnational labor migrations (2000).

indenture. This consciousness is driven by an anti-work ethos that in order to survive its diasporic condition must persevere in its labors to escape the strictures of migrant life. State racism, sexism and class conflict are some of the parameters that establish these boundaries in the lives of migrant laborers. In their life-worlds labor migrants are simultaneously made through imagined cultural relationships and structured through the experiences of state regulated industry. Girmit consciousness is a reflection of this historical circumstance and the dynamics of social and cultural change. Such a consciousness relies on the development of the idea of a contractual agreement and the purpose such an accord has in the values and principles established in the modern democratic idea of the social contract. In this relationship is the promise of social and economic rights accorded to labor migrants in exchange for their work.

This chapter examines the history of South Asian labor migration through a contemporary ethnographic example. Through this historical reading, an ethnography of the migration industry in Pakistan connects how the process of migration itself is controlled and managed from the point of view of the home country. Persian Gulf countries have served as a source for labor migration from South Asia since the 1950s and as early as the 1930s. The movement between these regions began to reach levels of mass migration in the 1970s and continues to be an important site in working class migrations from South Asia Much of the scholarship on international migration that views South Asia as a source for this labor supply examines this trend in terms of the potential for economic and social development of domestic economies. Labor migration to northern countries such as Europe and North America represent a qualitatively

different experience in the step migration from South Asia and the Middle East. This chapter examines the role of such migration in creating a labor migrant consciousness. This consciousness is shaped by the relationship of multinational capital and transnational labor. Such a structure crafts a particular migrant subjectivity that in order to mediate this system must pursue forms of social and cultural capital that enhance this experience. Further, the agency of social and cultural capital allows the further pursuit and exchange of economic capital. The history of migration is based on economic demands for certain labor classes. By tracing the work narratives of Pakistani labor migrants, how identities are constructed in terms of nationality, ethnicity, race and religion, will be addressed. Finally, this chapter examines the South Asian labor diaspora as a migration circuit.

System of Indenture

The period of indenture in the South Asian diaspora follows the end of slavery in the British colonies in 1837 until its suspension by the colonial Indian state in 1917. In this time period some 28 million men and women from the Indian subcontinent would go abroad to work in the plantations of East Asia and the Caribbean. This work was both of an agricultural and industrial kind in that many plantations were also locations where raw goods were refined and manufactured. Comparatively, this migration of indentured labor from South Asia and other regions was in stark contrast to the violence of forced migration inflicted upon millions of enslaved Africans. The continuation of empire-

building that required the enslavement of Africans subsequently required the indenture predominantly of Indians and Chinese.[3] In this context of slavery to indenture, empire was already shifting its meaning as the logic of its practices and its relations of power remained intact. The logic of empire produced the category of labor as a static category that was itself based in historically contingent meanings and conceptions. The category of 'free labor' based in colonial assumptions of freedom and the idea of work was of important use in the experience of indentured migration. It functioned as a kind of experimental discourse and practice for the colonies and the metropole in which the categories of labor and work gained new meanings.[4] This shifting meaning allowed the state to efficiently control labor populations against dissent and protest of the conditions of work through the constraints of these categories. In other words, as the state category of free labor shifted, new forms of social control were implemented in maintaining efficient and docile workers. As much as this was created through the categories of identitiy, they were also an accumulation in the technologies of control through the material agreements of labor contracts and the promise of rights provided in the implications of a social responsibility to this contract.

In this process recruitment served as an important rite of passage for labor migrants. Recruitment was of two kinds: formal and informal. Before intervention by the

[3] See Walton Look Lai's (1993) comparative history of indentured Indians and Chinese in the Caribbean.
[4] Kale (1998) makes this important argument in the context of Indian indentured labor. See also Bagchi (1999) for his discussion of the duality of the concept of labor. His argument about the cultural histories invoked in the labor concept of course goes back to at least E.P. Thompson's important intervention in labor history (1966). In the Indian context Prakash (1990) makes this argument in terms of discourses of freedom and the history of the concept of bonded labor and its relationship to cultural inventions of tradition. See also Chakarbarty (1989) and Fernandes (1997) for historical analysis of social categories of workers in the context of Indian factories.

colonial state to establish a formal regulated market, indentured migration followed closely the patterns established in slavery. The difference was that with the abolition of slavery, wage work was the standard. The problem was that wages themselves were not standardized and this created practices that were manipulative and arbitrary. This nascent form of human trafficking was the target of regulation by the colonial state. Regulating this market was in the interest of the colonial state in that by controlling such migrations it could benefit through establishing a migration industry of recruiters and agents that could be taxed through labor contracts. It also served the device of controlling this market in the interest of regulating and formalizing both the national and the colonial economy (Ramdin 2000).

The regulatory apparatus that encouraged this migration was based on a system of coercion and exploitation. In 1837 the colonial Government of India passed the Emigration Act that induced the recruitment of Indian labor to work in the plantations in the outlying colonies. This Act stipulated that

> the intending emigrant must appear before an office designated by the Government of India, along with the emigration agent, who was required to produce a written statement of the terms of the contract. The length of service was to be five years, renewable for further five-year terms. The emigrant must be returned, at the end of his service, to the port of departure. The vessel taking the emigrants was required to conform to specified standards of space, dietary etc. Each ship was required to carry a medical man to care for the coolies, An omission from the Act was the absence of similar requirements for the ships bringing back time-expired men to India (Tinker 1974, 64).

This mandate did not go unnoticed and was met with popular protest and agitation. Much of this debate drew its arguments from the anti-slavery movement and argued that regulated indentured migration was state-sanctioned slavery with a contract. Within this

initial Act there were sufficient ambiguities and omissions to make the conditions for worker exploitation all the worse. For example, as in the above passage, the conditions for transportation although specified were fairly arbitrary and allowed the possibility for the accruement of debts by laborers through the commonplace practice of high-interest loans to brokers. The key omission of return passage was a complicated matter for indentured migrants to negotiate through their meager wages much of which was remitted to their families.

The recruitment of laborers depended on the colonial logic of race and ethnicity. Workers were attributed characteristics that were assigned the attributes of productivity and discipline. As Harish Puri argues, after the historic Mutiny of 1857 the British reorganized the Indian army into the fictitious 'martial races' (1983, 19). These were the soldiers considered to be of the greatest fighting material and also seen as loyal to the British. In this classification Punjabis were the chosen race over other martial races such as Tamils from southern India that were deemed untrustworthy. Recruits from the Punjab province were viewed as strong fighters yet docile in nature. The role of Punjabis in military recruitment was subsequently transposed into schemes for worker recruitment because of their experiences abroad with colonial military expeditions. Mustapha Kamal Pasha has argued for a more structural understanding of how this Orientalist racism operated (1998). First, the recruitment of Indians into the military served to establish the relationship of the colonial state apparatus with the local Indian population. The principle of selectivity was a rational decision based in colonial Orientalist knowledge. As such it served to divide populations and simultaneously control them. It was this experience in

the colonies of state selection that led to certain groups of labor migrants to be recruited in greater number then others in the experience of indentured migrations. This process of overt coercion by the British to the state structures that they established allowed the consent of indigenous Indians. Therefore, Punjabis functioned as the indigenous representative of the colonial state.

In addition to the racial components of recruitment it was highly important that many of the indentured laborers came from agriculturally depressed areas that were famine prone. This is true in both India and China (Look Lai 1993), and was also an important factor in the movement of labor to the Americas (Jensen 1988, Takaki 1989). This push factor created the work opportunities initially for men to sustain themselves and those who supported their families in their home countries. As this form of work migration began to expand it attracted younger men who sought to accrue capital in the pursuit of greater social status and material gains such as providing the capital to get married and build a home for their family. Later in these migrations did women enter into the diaspora largely in the informal market of smuggling and trafficking.[5] These economic components are vital to understanding how it was that cultural discourses of race, nationality, ethnicity, gender and class combined in the logic of recruitment.

By the 1850s there were depots in Calcutta, Madras, Bombay, and soon thereafter in Karachi and Lahore. These depots were uniform in design and served the purpose of housing migrants until they were sent off to colonial plantations. Here the state mandated

[5] See for example Kale (1998, 167-171) on the debates in India that connected class to gender and women to morality. In the context of Chinese women in the United States see Cheng (1984). She describes the formal and informal movement of women in 19th century and its relationship to the concepts of work and labor.

that an emigration agent oversee the recruitment of laborers and the appointment of recruiters who themselves were required by law to obtain recruiting licenses from the Indian Protector of Emigrants. Migrants were kept in these depots until embarkation where they were housed and provided with the proper facilities such as a kitchen and a hospital. Here labor migrants were brought into the subjectivity of indenture. As Tinker writes "the labourer was ready to begin the process of becoming an indentured coolie; henceforth he was just one of many human parts in a vast assembly process" (1974, 137). This subject formation revolved around the health and well-being of the labor migrant to insure their productivity. This was maintained through a series of inspections, documentation and the disciplining by agents and recruiters (Tinker 1974, 137-142).

By 1917 the imperial and Indian governments ended state-sanctioned indentured migrations. By this time the outcry against indenture by Indians in public debates had gained momentum, and because the changing political economy of labor migration no longer promised certain gains in capital growth, the indenture system came to an end. This era marked an important moment in the creation of the international labor market system. And although, mass indentured migrations ended, other patterns emerged that were less formally controlled by states until after the Second World War. Indeed, the interwar period was marked by a global economic downturn. It was with the rebuilding of the global economy and the rapid industrialization of many areas of the world after the 1940s that facilitated the need for large transnational labor supplies.

Contemporary Labor Migration

It is true that contemporary labor migration is not coercive, conscribed or indentured as it was in the colonial period. This does not, however, undermine the argument between the relationship of the colonial and postcolonial patterns of labor migration. As I argue, the colonial regulatory structure far from being completely dismantled, is historically shaped in the contemporary patterns and production of transnational labor migration. The argument here is that this system of power that shifted from colonial to postcolonial, is relatively intact and operates in a similar fashion. As empire shifted its discursive practices from slavery to indenture, so did it from indenture to contemporary contract labor. Coercion, here, is also of an indirect manner in the way that Gramsci would point our attention (1971). That is to say that the process of direct coercion has transformed itself into an indirect coercion that is not altogether questioned. There are also specific mechanisms within current contract labor migration that mimic the conditions of indentured migrations. Current labor migrations are indeed produced and patterned as Saskia Sassen argues (1998). Specific economies, whether regional or national, organize the movement of human migrations. In this sense coercion is also produced. The choice to migrate is not entirely within a spectrum of drastically different options. The options are themselves constructed out of the broader issues of macro-economics. That is, migration is the only choice, for example, given conditions of under- and unemployment and the debt crisis of the state (see Chapter 2). And following the displacement of agricultural workers and peasants through mechanization and the Green Revolution in South Asia, labor migration follows a pattern that is not only rural to urban, but

transnational. The push factors of famine in the indentured period are now replaced by the push of technological displacement. This is certainly a complex relationship in the global economy of shifting labor patterns and the spread of commodities and technologies.

Much like indentured migration, labor migration in the current historical conjuncture is patterned by a set of interconnected yet contradictory global developments. The relationship of labor to capital in the capitalist mode of production insists upon a contradictory logic. In these developments an emerging regime of global labor supply has been managed and structured. The contradictions of this logic are apparent in the streamlining of labor as sources of an international reserve and the simultaneous racialization and feminization of this labor. This labor market segmentation is then a device for controlling the labor process in terms of wages and kinds of work. Racialized practices of labor exploitation are increasingly becoming a source of containment of reserve labor forces in the global market (Persaud 2001). These racial and cultural assumptions are historically embedded in the practices of labor recruitment. Through labor migration then, is a system of racial and class identification that has a transnational character. In the case of South Asian labor migrations the sources for these cultural racisms is historically linked to narratives of race and class established in the colonial indentured period of migration.

Ethnography of Labor Migration in Pakistan

In the experience of labor migration from Pakistan some commentators have noted that it parallels the conditions of indentured servitude (Gilani 1985). This began in the 1970s and early 1980s when the bulk of labor migration went to the Middle East as temporary construction workers. This period was marked by the large movement of workers for a set period of time through state contracted agencies. Later this model was followed by large scale construction throughout the Middle East, primarily the Gulf countries. It was also in this era that labor migration became of interest to the state, at least initially in terms of facilitating interstate contracts and controlling remittances to Pakistan. For the state such contracts are big business that require the organization of mass pools of labor. At this time, the Pakistani state provided resources for the study of migration and its effects on the economy. By and large most reports touted migration as an integral part of Pakistan's successful economic growth and outlined policy guidelines to promote further expansion (Arif and Irfan 1997; Azam 1995; Irfan 1986; Kazi 1989). Indeed, as one economist argues remittances from workers in the Gulf in large part kept the military regime of Zia ul-Haq afloat (Zaidi, 1999, 431). The influence of workers remittances in Pakistan throughout the 1980s and 1990s not only created a new middle class and the growth of urban centers, but was responsible for economic development in Pakistan's rural areas through the dispersion of money to numerous areas from workers.. The policy guidelines created out of this body of migration literature by Pakistan scholars have rarely been followed by the state and increasingly resources for migration research has been discontinued.[6]

[6] Many researchers have attributed this attitude of the state to catering to the interests of the international

As early as the 1930s following the end of indentured migrations from South Asia, labor migrants were recruited in the newly discovered oil fields of the Middle East. At this time, British oil companies that were in operation in the Middle East benefited from the model of indenture that was previously in place. In the late 1950s migrations continued that followed prior colonial links and assisted in the labor migration of Pakistanis to the UK to fill labor shortages after the Second World War. This was an organized movement of people under systems in which labor migrants were considered temporary guest-workers. In the 1950s South Asian workers were also increasingly going to the Middle East as temporary workers. This migration was for the most part unregulated by the Pakistani government until 1979 with the establishment of specific institutions to oversee this movement. Until this moment much of the migration to the Middle East from Pakistan was informal and relied on personal networks that included word of mouth and kinship networks of both friends and family (Abella 1987).

In the boom period of the 1980s and early 1990s recruitment was no longer supervised under the state depot system formed in the indenture period. Labor recruitment was privatized and handed over to independent employment agencies. The state overlooked recruitment and still deployed labor migrants through government agencies that handled direct work contracts with other governments. Direct visas from employing countries were also an option outside of the private employment agencies. This allowed workers to supersede recruitment because they found work through their own efforts (often through previous experience) or through the aid of others working

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financial institutions that prefer studies on poverty rather than the short-term ameliorative effects of

abroad. Direct visas were for some time the most common form of securing employment prior to the late 1970s and state intervention. This changed with the mass mobilization of workers sent abroad beginning in the early 1980s that required regulation. State control then led to the proliferation of recruitment agents as an independent industry. The Government of Pakistan's Bureau of Emigration oversees the control of migration through two of its subagencies: in the public sector the Protector of Emigrants, and in the private sector the Overseas Employment Corporation. These agencies are responsible for licensing recruitment agents and for the legal welfare of labor migrants.

Broker activity by private employment agencies has become big business in the international migration industry. Organized suppliers of contract labor such as the US based Labor Ready have become a model for private recruitment agencies to provide temporary labor worldwide (Persaud 2001, 381). Also referred to as body shops these operations often lease out the services of workers from unskilled to highly skilled work. In the case of leasing out labor, workers are under contract to brokering agencies and thus provide a service as part of their agreement with the agency. This shift in labor contracting to subcontracting has enormous consequences in the ability to organize this labor under more formal, protective means through unions (Stalker 2000). Subcontracting also allows for the susceptibility of transnational labor migrants to illegal work conditions. This pattern is found throughout the labor migration system where states are increasingly withdrawing responsibility to citizens and placing the onus upon the private sector.

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migration.

As I explored the migration industry in Pakistan I primarily focused on state institutions and the private sector. While in the capital, Islamabad, I would interview countless bureaucrats to little avail. Many of my interviews would yield little in terms of information that wasn't already available to me through archival information. It was a rare moment when a turn of phrase revealed a subtle nuance of the industry, or the intentionality of the state apparatus through its functionaries. Most of this information was of the policy kind, and the changing nature of the role of the state in controlling labor migration. The private sector was similar. In Lahore, where I based most of my ethnographic research on the migration industry with transnational migrants, interviews with administrators of private contracting companies often led nowhere. But in casual conversations I found out the most information. Of course transnational migrants provided the most information in terms of their experiences and interactions with these institutions. I met many labor migrants as I waited for meetings. I spent countless hours sitting with workers who themselves were waiting to meet with contracting agents and what the current projects were being contracted for.

Brokers/Agents/Contractors

The location of contracting agencies took me to far-flung areas of Lahore. Contracting agencies themselves often came and went. The industry is such that many do not sustain their licensing with the government. There are various reasons for this, most of which include some probationary or illegal activity. In documents provided by the Bureau of Emigration some 210 agencies in Lahore were licensed in the operation of overseas labor

migration as of December 2000. Many of these agencies when I tried to track them down had moved or were no longer in existence. When I questioned government officials about this they admitted the difficulty of controlling the industry. Licenses exist as a formal attempt to supervise the activity of contracting agents. As such they are issued upon approval of government officials for three year terms. The problem of this supervision is that offices often move, dissolve, or are closed down by the government. This becomes difficult to track and is in large part the responsibility of the contracting agency to renew their license.

In Pakistan the recruitment process takes place in several stages. Labor contract demands are usually sent from receiving countries to recruiting agencies and government agencies in sending countries. Recruiting agents then advertise the need for labor recruits generally through newspaper advertisements and contact lists of active files of labor migrants. Many of these advertisement lure labor migrants through promises of work in the US, UK, Canada and Australia. Most of these offers are for professional employment such accounting, computer programming, and the medical fields. Labor contracts for non-technical workers to these countries are rare to nonexistent in Pakistan, but because of the attraction of these countries such advertisements are quite popular. The reality of many of these advertisements is that they offer jobs on a contract basis to labor migrants in the Middle East. The assumption and lure of this practice, is the possibility of making ones way to these countries from the Middle East. Most often, advertisers seek workers for short term assignments in Gulf countries.

Once a quota is filled for potential labor contracts the recruitment agency provides a selection of candidates to the employer abroad. The choice of who is hired is up to the discretion of the employer and depends upon the occupation. For example unskilled and non-technical work is less competitive than say service or professional work. Once the employer has made a decision this information is sent to the Bureau of Emigration to process work visas and the documentation required for travel abroad (passports, identification etc.). Various schemes have been launched by the Government of Pakistan to facilitate this process (eg. special ID cards) and to manage investments in Pakistan (through property, housing colonies, tax breaks, special bonds). For frequent labor migrants the incentives of these schemes is that they also provide insurance and medical benefits to family members. There success, however, has been limited because of the expenses involved in dues.

Recruitment strategies generally follow two distinct patterns. The first referred to as *deployment* is the practice in which labor contractors gather, organize, and move workers. This is the kind of labor recruitment by brokers and agents that has already been described in the acquisition of potential workers at employment agencies. A second practice called a *spot-market* refers to the gathering of workers at places of convenience. In the example of Pakistan, both strategies are used by agencies and are at times intertwined. Labor migrants gather at various places in metropolitan locations. In my research in Lahore many workers who came from their respective villages and communities quickly learned the places in which recruitment information was accessible. This is by and large an informal gathering in which certain locations become labor

migrant hangouts. These include chai-khannas (teahouses), hotels (working class eateries), addas (stands) and chowks (roundabouts), and other public places where traditional day laborers can be found. The strategy of the spot market allows workers to market themselves in the absence of state support through work allocation. Here wages are arranged between worker and employer without any supervision of the state. This verbal contract for day labor falls in the category of unprotected labor and are notoriously well below established standards of wage work. For labor migrants the spot market form makes workers susceptible to fake agents and smuggling rackets. Legitimate labor migrant work is also often given to those who offer the best offer in fees (both legal and illegal bribes) paid to the recruiting agent. Because the supply for cheap labor is high and the demand low, competition is fierce. Many recruitment agencies also simultaneously operate through legal contract labor and offer illegal services to traffickers.

In my interviews with labor migrants in Lahore many described a network of agents both legitimate and fake involved in the labor migrant industry. For some it is clear when agents were not offering legal means of work, whereas for others it is hard to distinguish between the two. The latter also included a viewpoint that agents whether legal or illegal offer the same access to resources. Because the mechanisms through which both kinds of labor opportunity are offered are so similar it is near impossible to tell the difference in certain circumstances. As some labor migrants confessed the only way to tell is when a worker ends up in a certain country and realizes they have been lied to. Such testimonials were also common with contract laborers who most commonly complained of receiving their wages late or not receiving their wages in full.

From the perspective of the labor migration industry the resemblance between legal and illegal outfits is uncanny. Illegal smuggling involved agents who promised certain terms of work and were able to produce contracts and illegal documents to allow workers to travel abroad. As several migrant workers I interviewed told me, many of these rackets operated out of travel agencies. Here forged documents are made and workers are sent to countries such as the UK, Canada and the US. Once in these countries many labor migrants then seek to obtain political asylum. In recent times Canada has become the more accessible of the three because of the level of enforcement of immigration law and the difficulty of obtaining asylum. Many workers initially go to the Gulf countries and increasingly Southeast Asian countries to work on contract labor and then eventually make there way to the next country. The travel agency that books flights and then prepares documents also maintains the debts of labor migrants and the accrued interest of such debts. One description offered to me in an interview described this experience:

> A friend of mine told me about this agent here in Lahore that would make a ticket for me to America. When I met the agent and told him I wanted to go to America he said first go to the Gulf and then we will make papers for you to go to Canada. Once you get there we will find a way for you to go to New York.[7]

After working on contract in the Gulf for a year the agent sent him papers that would allow him to go to Canada. It was only then that he realized they were forged documents after a friend looked at them. He was afraid of the consequences, so he stayed in Dubai and then returned to Pakistan. A veteran labor migrant who had been to many Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait, Libya and the UAE, on both legal

[7] Interview May 16, 2001

and illegal labor contracts explained that it didn't matter whether the contract was real or not as long as he got paid:

> Sometimes when you go to these countries it doesn't matter how you get there. I did it both ways[legal and illegal] and there were good things and bad things with both. With a legal contract there was no guarantee that you would get paid and the Arab bosses were harder on us then they were on the workers from other nationalities. It was the same with fake papers.[8]

He later had to come back to Pakistan because of bypass surgery. He now drives a cab in Lahore and sold his documents that he bought as forgeries to a friend in Karachi. As he told me if he could still work abroad if he would do it.

In the process of interviewing labor migrants this fluidity between legal and illegal activity was difficult to distinguish. Explicit explanations in my interviews seemed to be patterned in similar fashion with the state simultaneously mediating both legal and illegal activity. The UN Convention on Organized Crime in November 2000 defines the terms of illegal activity as follows:

> 'Trafficking in persons' shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of person, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability.[9]

The illegal means of trafficking and smuggling is defined by the use of coercion and deception. For labor migrants this is not always a clear sign of illegal activity. International trafficking has been estimated to be a $6 to $7 billion dollar industry according to figures collected in 1994 (Stalker 2000). Indeed there are ways in which the states mediation of legal and illegal activity blurs these boundaries. The relationship

[8] Interview November 16, 2000.
[9] UN documents (2000), available at www.undcp.org/palermo/convmain.html

between legal and illegal discourses of labor migrant subjectivity is further explored in Chapter 4.

Patterns of Labor Migration

Much of the focus of professional migration from Pakistan has focused on the costs of the so called brain drain to the nation.[10] But in much larger numbers there has been more of a brawn drain of working class laborers. In both categories the lack of employment opportunities in Pakistan limit the possibilities. Transnational migration is an option that provides opportunities for workers across classes to earn an income. The patterns of these migrations are becoming increasingly complex and no longer simply based on the concept of migrants leaving their home countries for new lands in one-way migrations. New patterns of migration are emerging that are more seasonal and involve the process of step migration. Transnational communities are increasingly diverse in their migration strategies.

State organized migration has led to numerous developments in the patterns of labor migration from Pakistan. Temporary migration has resulted in a pattern of seasonal migration in which labor migrants will work on contract for a few years and return to Pakistan until their savings run out. Other labor migrants will use temporary migration to the Middle East and East Asia to migrate to other regions in a pattern of step migration. This pattern is near impossible to quantify barring large scale research. Nonetheless it is a prominent pattern for many labor migrants to increase their cultural capital and status

toward migrating to Northern countries such as the UK, Canada and the US. These countries are represented in mythic terms by many migrants who will make it to these countries by any means. Indeed, conceptions of these locations is informed by a mixture of influences from social networks to mass media. The creation of these imaginaries has much to do with how transnational migrants conceive of prospects in these countries.

Since the 1960s Pakistanis of the professional classes have been migrating to the US and the UK. Increasingly this is the pattern of labor migration that is required in the Middle East particularly in the health occupations, accounting, and IT professionals. This pattern of semi-permanent migration is also pivotal in the migrations that involve family reunification. Whereas working-class migrations are primarily of male workers, professionals often will migrate with their families. Nearly all migrations involve the knowledge of human networks and contacts in which family reunification is a strategy for migration particularly in countries such as the US and the UK. Both of these countries are a source for increasing numbers of working class migrations through the process of family reunification in addition to other migration strategies (Stalker 2000). Step migration is an additional aspect of this strategy to northern countries in which migrants make their way to various countries en route to specific locations. This movement towards Northern countries for greater life chances and resources has become a kind of seasonal migration. For example, many labor migrants will spend part of the year working in countries such as the US and returning to their families in Pakistan for extended periods of time.

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[10] The economist Jagdish Bhagwati famously has argued for a brain drain tax that initially received some

Economic Role of Labor Migration

Much of the debate surrounding the economic role of labor migration has centered on the material benefits gained by labor migrants. On one hand, remittances sent back to Pakistan have played an important role in the national economy as it has in other South Asian countries (Bagchi 1999). This source of income has an important role in the livelihoods of those who depend on labor migration. On the other hand, labor migrants often return to Pakistan with material goods such as electronics and appliances that benefit their quality of life. Some argue that this behavior exhibits a tendency toward short term solutions of the problem of income for labor migrants and is not a long term strategy (Addleton 1992, Lefebvre 1999). Although there is merit in this argument, labor migration itself is based on the short-term alleviation of a shrinking income and a dwindling living standard by providing access to temporary wage work. It is hardly a get rich scheme but a long term strategy that accrues cultural capital in the form of skills and knowledge in the hope of future job possibilities. Transnational labor migration has also played an important part in the economic development of working-class migrants. Through the cash provided by remittances many previously unskilled migrants were able to accrue enough money to start small-scale businesses, shops and other industries. This upward mobility had an enormous impact on the Pakistani economy in terms of broadening the distribution of capital (Zaidi 1999, 431).

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attention in the late 1970s in United Nations circles but was quickly set aside. See Bhagwati (1998).

Remittances in the year 2000 were officially tabulated by the Bank of Pakistan at around US$1 billion. The figures from 1995 to 1999 were approximately US$1.5 billion.[11] Economists estimate that out of these official figures of remittances, a much larger figure of some US$3 to 4 billion was actually entering Pakistan. Much of this disparity in numbers is because of unofficial schemes such as informal networks of banking called *hundi* in South Asia and *hawala* in the Middle East. This is an elaborate system of monetary exchange that allows workers to send remittances to their home countries with less fees than charged by banks and without the formal paperwork. This is a popular way of transferring money from the Middle East where many of the largest hundi operators are located. Dubai in the UAE is one of the central locations of this network as is Karachi in Pakistan. Since 2001 the Government of Pakistan has tried to eliminate these forms of money transfer. For the state this type of money transfer creates enormous problems. For one, a large flow of currency is entering the country without the state benefiting from such exchange. A larger problem is that this type of exchange is difficult to track through a paper trail, thus allowing the exchanges of cash through alleged criminal activity untraceable. The network of smugglers and traffickers often operate through this form of money exchange and are also connected to its operations.

Construction of Overseas Identities: Transnational Muslims

Labor migration has also created a subjectivity through the navigation of this system. For Pakistani labor migrants working in Gulf countries there is the connection that is assumed

[11] See the *Annual Report, 1999-2000* of the State Bank of Pakistan, p. 136.

to their Muslim co-religionists. A large majority of Pakistani labor migrants come from the Punjab and NWFP regions.[12] This is important to understand in terms of the recruitment of these workers. These two ethnic groups were the colonially preferred labor force. The retention of colonial racial concepts of the so-called martial races has been mixed. What has remained is a structure of sending labor migrants from Pakistan that structurally prefers Punjabis and Pashtos. What was once based on colonial concepts of race, in the postcolonial era is transformed into access based on historical preference and a conglomeration of racial stereotypes. In many ways, the conceptual category of race is self-perpetuated in relation to concepts of work and discipline. Hence, the popular conception of Punjabis and Pashtos as hard-working. Simultaneously, such discourses within Pakistan of ethnic conflict often have the opposite effect. The discourse of discipline versus idleness depends on particular claims to resources and access often generated in ethnic competition at the national level. These national discourses in Pakistan find their way into transnational locations in a mixture of ethnic and racial construction in which cultural conceptions of Pakistanis become naturalized into racial categories.

When labor migrants are abroad they are seen as Pakistanis, to other nationals they are understood in terms of their ethnic identity. Additionally, religion has become an important cultural identity from which workers make connections to their employers. Labor migrants, for example, adopt cultural practices from their Arab counterparts that they view as more religiously authentic than there own. This is visible in the influence of

[12] This was provided in documents to the author by the Bureau of Emigration, 2000, and also reprinted in

Wahhabi thought and practice on returnees from the Gulf. For example, such practices are most readily visible in the approach to the veiling of women (Lefebvre 1999). Comportment and styles of dress are often superficially adopted as proper attire following extended stay in Gulf countries, particularly Saudi Arabia. In this case, Saudi Arabia stands as the figure of religious authority in terms of cultural practice. Since the 1980s labor migrants have become increasingly influenced by the discourses of Islam prevalent in countries such as Saudi Arabia. The predominance of Wahhabi thought has seeped its way into many of the practices of Sunni belief in Pakistan. Indeed, such changes in practice have contributed to debate within religious communities in Pakistan in terms of proper religious practice. These discourses of orthodoxy have played an important role in working-class culture and the practice of Islam.

The adoption of these cultural practices does not mean that Pakistanis remain docile to the actions of their Arab coreligionists. As one labor migrant Masud explained to me:

> The best people I ever met when I was abroad who were also like our people [Pakistani], from Sri Lanka, India, Bangladesh, they were all good people. The best of course are Pakistanis. We would get along because we were the same. Even though it wasn't easy to communicate because of different languages we understood each other. We have the same culture, the same food, we are the same kind of people… The trouble was really with the Arabs. I was surprised by this since we are both Muslims. The Palestinians and Lebanese we worked with didn't care about anyone but themselves. Then the Arab bosses were even worse. They looked down on all of us and treated us badly. They tried to cheat us of our pay and there was never any respect.

Later when I asked him for more details about the conflict with Arabs he explained their thinking more thoroughly:

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the *Survey of Pakistan, 1999-2000* issued by the Government of Pakistan.

> They are like people everywhere. They would call us names in Arabic we didn't understand. But we knew what they were saying. They would do this when they thought we weren't working hard enough. They would treat us all differently. Some of the other Arabs were treated better because they could communicate with each other. But the Palestinians were treated the worst because the bosses thought they were lazy. Many of them worked harder than any of us, but they were still treated badly. We were somewhere in the middle.[13]

This complex assessment of cultural ties and hierarchies reflect concepts of class and race as they are acted out through cultural and religious practice. In the conflict with Arabs discourses of categorization become complex. For example, the racialization of non-Arabs by Arab bosses was a common theme in my interviews. This followed a logic of lazy others in a mixture of biological racism predicated on genetic difference and class difference. Faced with this discrimination, workers often found spaces of solidarity. This bond between South Asians in the above description is a common portrayal by South Asian labor migrants. Such a logic makes sense in terms of shared cultural practices and the need for group organization in the face of the divisive practices of Arab employers. Here race and class are used to distinguish Arab employers from South Asian workers as well as other Arab workers. The hierarchy of race in question depends upon cultural ideas of docility, work and discipline.

Religious ties in this sense between coreligionists of different nationality is an ambivalent practice. On one hand there is an assumed connection at the level of religious practice, but on the other religious identity breaks down into other cultural categories of difference. Ideas of cultural difference are then assigned value based in the difference of the concepts of race and class. These transnational identities allow Pakistanis to borrow religious practices from the Middle East but to also maintain a critique of other cultural

[13] Interview November 7, 2000.

practices. In the same interview Masud started to talk disparagingly of his Arab employers who would have many wives. These old Arab men, as he referred to them, would then bring young girls from South and Southeast Asia to marry them. Here his disgust was in the treatment of male labor migrants while simultaneously desiring women from these areas. To him this was not the way of Islam and was more of a tragedy. It also reflects a sexual economy of desire in terms of social relationships in which South Asian men are vilified as inadequate workers yet South Asian women are seen as desirous. In this sense there are multiple levels of disjuncture. Cases from child smuggling to abuse of women domestic workers, including violent and sexual abuse, in Gulf countries by Arab patrons are constantly referred to not only in the international press but in daily discussions of transnational migrants. Such paradoxes add to this point of unraveling the supposed pure cultural practices in Muslim homelands and the religious connections between co-religionists through the Islamic conception of the *umma*, or community of believers.

This work and sexual economy creates an ambivalence, indeed a disturbance in many Muslim labor migrants assumptions of the Middle East. For many, Arabs are understood to convey the pure cultural values of Islam. In their experiences the realization of contradictory practices by their Arab employers leads to a process of critique and analysis whereby certain practices are seen as more legitimate than others. This form of rational thinking is akin to Hirshkind's (2001) idea of religious reason. These Islamic publics are complex arenas of cultural critique and practice that have a logic of their own. In the example of labor migration to Gulf countries, the use of race

and class is rarely articulated as such. These concepts are often in the realm of being taken for granted. Indeed, for many labor migrants because of the use of race and class difference without its conceptual articulation as such, religion becomes the practical discourse of ethical reason.

Conclusion

The contemporary patterns of Pakistani labor migrants are complex and follow many paths. Structurally, these patterns are formed in relation to the history of indentured migration. This prior history is instrumental to the basis of the legal-juridical control of migration as well as the construction of the current migration industry. As I demonstrated in my ethnography of the labor migration industry in Pakistan, there are formal similarities between the process of contemporary labor migration and that of the indentured period. Historically, these two periods are connected through the lineage of labor migration regulations established in the colonial period. Moreover, the structure of the labor migration industry has parallels to the colonial model in the use of contractors and agents. The primary shift is the privatization of contracting agencies away from state control of this industry. This privatization has resulted in legal and illegal practices of recruitment and trafficking that the state continues to regulate. This relationship of the state and the law to legal and illegal practices is the subject of Chapter 4.

The relationship of the history of indentured and contemporary labor migration provides insight into the workings of capitalism in the demand for a labor supply. This

demand is predicated on the constant need of new mechanisms of control and power. These devices allow for the spread of capital and markets that require them. In this example, transnational labor supplies serve the needs of multinational capital. Further, these structures are constitutive of labor migrant consciousness through the concept of the contract and the creation of transnational communities. This girmit consciousness has become increasingly race and class inflected with the expansion of the global labor supply. As such the migration circuit between Pakistan and Gulf countries is complex and contradictory in terms of work experience and cultural exchange. As such, the multiple patterns of labor migration have created a diverse relationship amongst these Muslim countries. One pattern that has now become commonplace is the experience of step migration, as a result of limited opportunities in intermediary countries such as those in the Middle East, toward northern countries in Europe and North America in which service economies offer greater employment opportunities.

This process of migration requires the acquisition of social and cultural forms of capital in the navigation of this system. Obtaining these forms of capital also creates a sense criticality in terms of mediating multiple structures in which transnational migrants must find their way through. This critical sense of the world is a form of reason in which events are made sense of, categories of analysis are interpreted, and social relationships are lived through. For transnational migrants within the histories of labor migration they exist as the underside of capitalism and empire-building. Shifting regimes of global power are implicated in the demands of migrants, and importantly, which migrants. Such is the system of recruitment that is based in histories of racial and class classifications.

Chapter 4: States of Migration: The Production of the State and Migration in Pakistan

Introduction

This chapter explores the states production of transnational labor migrants as legal subjects. The state functions as a mediator of transnational labor migration through its tactics and methods of control. The production of state effects that construct labor migrant subjectivities are found, as I argue, in the state and in the national and transnational sphere of interstate migration. Specifically this chapter examines how state frames the subjectivities of the Pakistani working class labor migration through discourses of il/legality. As I argue, il/legality as subject formation is a complex relationship that depends on the state control of capital and labor flows. The capital-labor relationship is not only one of the economic to the social, but placed in the context of the state and citizenship, is also constructed around ideas of legal and illegal. As an ethnography of the state and its relationship to migration, it is argued that the legal production of illegality crafts the spatial limits of labor migrant subjectivity. In other words, the law creates the basis of forms of symbolic violence in terms of the migrant laborers access to rights and a certain conception of citizenship. Here economic and social rights as opposed to a strictly legal idea of rights are vital to the conception of citizenship. Thus this chapter argues that the states control over the legal and illegal

discourses of labor migration creates a particular legal subjectivity that regulates such transnational flows.

In the example of the Pakistani state, a postcolonial state apparatus, the arbitrary state control of transnational migratory flows is predicated on discursive notions of national identity, and mediated by the capitalist mode of production. Indeed the theoretical role of the state varies greatly in its practice. Hence, the objective is to illuminate the comparative role of the state in the control of labor migration through textual and ethnographic analysis. To examine the role of various states in the migration process, this essay follows the migrant subject through interstate exchange. This examination includes the historical analysis of legal codes that mandate the role of the state, and an ethnography of state practices in regards to labor migration. The role of the state is crucial to the spatial construction of migrant subjectivity in addition to the formation of migrant social and cultural capital.

State Practices: Power and Control

'The state is not the reality which stands behind the mask of political practice. It is itself the mask which prevents our seeing political practice as it is.'
Philip Abrams, "Notes on the Difficulty of Studying the State," 1988

To enter modernity, it is supposed that the state *manage* the nation. For traditional theories of nationalism and state formation this organization is predicated on the creation of the category of class through the structuring effects of capitalism. The question for

these theories is not really one of whether and in what form classes existed in a prior form to the conception of class, but in what ways the nation can be crafted through the formation of new classes. Here, the idea is that a strong state, based on a robust economy, is dictated by the formation and mobility of a large middle class[1]. These classes promote the engines of capitalism and 'positive' economic growth. For postcolonial societies, the creation of these classes marks a shift from colonial to postcolonial regimes and the transition to the increased state control and regulation of capitalist modes of production.

Althusser's influential essay "Ideology and the Ideological State Apparatuses" (1971), put forth a theory of the state based on how power relations are reproduced through the state apparatus. Class relations are reproduced through the work of the ideological state apparatus that interpellates subjects and the imaginary representation of the world. This is a process of social formation in which subjects are identified through the state. For Althusser the imaginary and the process of interpellation prevent workers from seeing the contradictions of their labor. This is the work of the ideological state apparatus in maintaining the status quo. This structural approach is important in analyzing how the state masks power relations and how it further acts in terms of its practices. Its weakness is that it fails to account for the historicity of the subject and instead is based in the Marxist universal subject that is the proletariat. As various theorists influenced by Althusser argue, subjects, too, have agency to interpret their

[1] The middleness of the middle class is explored in Chatterjee (1993) in terms of the Bengali nationalist elite. Here he describes a process of the production of the 'middle' in a hegemonic structure of domination.

contradictions and act through them.[2] The state does not control power in an absolute sense, although the ideological state apparatus works to maintain this idea.

Foucault argues in a similar vein in his work on governmentality (1991). Here he maps the genealogy of the state and the control of the 'economic' sphere in European history. In its origin, the meaning of economic was simply the sphere of the family that was controlled through legal-juridical, political and social means. As the state and the nation began to take shape in accordance with one another the economic shifted in meaning to the concept of population. This is an important distinction between the use of the terms of the nation and the state. The nation in its capacity as a population is rationalized as such through the logic of the state – that is through government rationality defined through instrumental reason. Management of the state through governmentality introduces the "economy into political practice" (Foucault 1991, 92). Hence, the economy is not an objective fact as it purports to be, but rather a means for the state to control and manage its population. As Foucault argues this position, he warns that the power of the state is more mythical than actual. Indeed such an evaluation matches the structural model of Althusser but allows for the possibility of other readings and openings by focusing on the tactics and strategies the state wields to maintain its sense of control and power.

Materialist approaches to the state have tended to construct theories based on its boundedness, as a structure, apparatus, or configuration of institutions or organizations. Recently, theorists have made a call to understand the state through its elusive, porous

[2] See for example the work of Wendy Brown (1997) and Judith Butler (1997).

boundaries (Mitchell 1991). This recalls Abrams position that the state is indeed a mask over actually existing political practices (1988). Both are, it appears, grappling for a theory that views the state as a dynamic process with few given boundaries. As Corrigan and Sayer (1985) argue, state formation is a central process in cultural revolution and the construction of identity. Following Foucault, they argue that social identity is not constituted by the state but regulated through its routines. Hence, culture and sociality is a central aspect of what the state is involved in. Yet, one must be cautious with this idea of culture as an explanatory model. As Kamala Visweswaran has shown, anthropological work on the state has too often conflated absolutist notions of culture when explaining weak and strong states (1999). This position views the failure of developing identifiable civil societies with states that have too much culture. Hence, these 'affective states' rely on an equation that pairs culture with failing states, and rationality with healthy states. In order to avoid this pitfall it is necessary to view the state and its culture as practices and processes constantly under renewal.

In the era of neo-liberal economic practices, national markets are bound by the dictates of free market reform and the opening of domestic markets to foreign capital. This ideological move is mirrored in theories of transnationalism that argue for the inability of the nation-state to keep up with capital flows. Yet, in this focus on capital flow and the state, the nation seems to curiously disappear. In such instances the state in relation to the effects of transnationalism is undertheorized. The work of Basch et al. (1994), Lowe (1996), Lowe and Lloyd (1997), Ong (1999), and Ong and Nonini (1997), have been influential in articulating the relationship of the state to transnationalism.

Rather than arguing that the state is no longer useful, they argue for the ways in which the state has gained renewed significance through globalization. Hence, one can modify the earlier statement that the state *manages* the (trans)nation. The most trenchant critiques have been those that pinpoint the effects of neoliberalism as relieving the state from its duties of welfare to the nation. The realization of transnational flows has allowed the state to increase its control of the (trans)nation while simultaneously decreasing the services that were once its domain. As Lowe and Lloyd (1997) convincingly argue transnational capital for the state negates the need for a welfare state that acts as a legal, political and cultural entity, and instead requires an interventionist state that regulates labor, materials, and capital. In this shift the nation in the absence of adequate access to resources must become transnational.

The Law, The State and Migration

Recent scholarship in Migration Studies has focused on the ethnographic analysis of documentation and the legal role of the state in controlling migration flows. Nicholas DeGenova (2002) in an insightful review of this literature explores the implications of such studies on a concept he refers to as the legal production of migrant illegality. By this he refers to migrant illegality as a distinct category separate from undocumented migrants. Documentation is not a necessary condition of legality although it is constitutive of it. But from a methodological point of view, studying undocumented migrants as opposed to the constructions of illegality is politically suspect. Whereas the

study of illegality questions the process of state power, to focus on migrants as undocumented leaves open the problems of complicity with state surveillance through the ethnographic gaze.

Illegality is constructed out of many discursive arenas, the primary one being legal-juridical discourses. Indeed, the illegality of noncitizens is a subjectivity produced in relationship to the concept of citizenship and the nation-state. Illegality as a category entails a set of practices as much as citizenship does. Such a relationship is instituted through the law and is enforced by way of state control and practice. The relationship between the law and that state is not consistent in practical terms. That is, enforcement of the law is based on the strategies and tactics of the state. For illegality, state control regulates this concept by the selective use of deportability. The construction of illegality and subsequent deportability is based on a set of criteria that constructs the illegal migrant. This is based on multiple logics that cross the terrain of politics, economics, social and cultural debates. Immigration for most nation-states is considered a threat to the welfare of its citizenry, whether or not immigration is a tactic of the state to produce a fresh workforce. Certainly, some countries under pressure because of declining population growth welcome immigrants as workers, but nonetheless, discourses on immigrants continue to view them as a problem. For example, under the controlled circumstances of the guest-worker system prominent in many parts of the world, contracted labor migration as temporary immigration is a solution to certain problems. But this migration is also susceptible to the constructions of illegality. For example, a temporary worker that has overstayed a work visa. Under conditions of legality this

worker is fluidly linked to the one that has overstayed and is now illegal. Yet there is an important distinction both for the worker and the state. And depending on enforcement, the status of migrant workers becomes an important mechanism of control for the state. Not only through direct policing, but through the creation of statuses that are self-policed. Illegality then is a mode of subjectivity that creates its own set of practices and processes.

To chart such an experience, the role of the state is paramount. As Saskia Sassen argues migrations are patterned and produced (1998). This is to say that labor migrations are structured according to the economic needs of the state. They are also controlled by the social and political debates surrounding migration and the discursive construction of the 'immigrant.' Her argument goes beyond the push and pull theories prominent in international migration research by questioning the usual assumptions of what creates this dynamic. For example, she argues that wealth and poverty do not necessarily equate to pull and push factors (Sassen 1988; 1998, Ch. 4). Indeed, these relationships are embedded in historical relationships and the uneven experience of globalization. But for Sassen such structures are based in choices that are socially produced. The choices to migrate are themselves based on how migrations are produced. That is, individual choice and the option to migrate as a form of agency is located in the structures that constitute migrations.

The production of legality and illegality is of central importance to the structural control of migration flows. As such, the role of the law is not uniform for the state nor are there established standards in international law in terms of its application to migration and migrants. Legal codes are themselves historically constructed and dependant on

cultural constructs that elaborate their function. For the casual, informal sector of wage work, the law is the realm in which constraints and openings are to be found. Indeed, there is much ambiguity in the practice of the law that has to do with the formalization of legal codes and the certainty of their application. Because of this ambiguity certain categories appear outside of the law, so to speak. Enforcement of the law then is not solely prohibitive, but also a function of how practices get around the law. In this sense, the law not only mandates a particular order it enacts a kind of violence, both material and symbolic.[3] In Walter Benjamin's essay 'Critique of Violence' (1978) he argues that the state maintains its monopoly over the control of violence through the law:

> that the law's interest in a monopoly of violence vis-à-vis individuals is not explained by the intention of preserving legal ends but, rather, by that of preserving the law itself; that violence, when not in the hands of the law, threatens it not by the ends that it may pursue but by its mere existence outside the law. (281)

The law establishes the parameters of legal and illegal activity through the control of violence. That is to say that the law maintains the use of violence by the state in order to control its populations. To be outside of the law is to be outside of the nation. The nation-state is itself defined by its population. Movement across borders and within them alters the definitions of the nation. The nation, traditionally a static category that is defined by the state, is altered through the fact of diasporas and transnational migrations. Changes in population and the control of these populations is then reflected in the law. Immigration law restricts who belongs, and who can belong given the right circumstances. In these circumstances the state acts as a moral force and the law as its secular manifestation. Justice as a conceptually separate entity from the state and the law is nonetheless a

[3] This is to be taken in the sense that Bourdieu analyzed the role of violence as tied to economic forms of

concern. Hence, "natural law attempts, by the justness of the ends, to 'justify' the means, positive law to 'guarantee' the justness of the ends through the justification of the means" (Benjamin 1978, 278). Legal-juridical logic works between these two poles of naturalizing and rational, positivistic, categories of the law in formulating its meaning of justice. The nation is itself a naturalized concept that is based in notions of race, gender, class and ethnicity.[4] Thus, in shifting between naturalized and rational categories of meaning, the nation is at times susceptible to new entries by groups not formally part of the states conception of the nation. What becomes important here are the genealogies of how groups of people are identified as belonging and not belonging, legal and illegal, that for the state to enforce such a logic must act through force and domination.

Il/legality as a mode of subjectivity

The relationship of the state to subject formation comes through the discourse of power. The works of Michel Foucault on the concept of subjectivity offer important insights into the processes in operation at the level of the subject and the state. His analysis for the study of subject formation follows three modes of objectification: division or dividing practices, scientific classification, and subjectification.[5] The first two are ideological and spatial practices that separate groups through practices and devices of domination meant to create differences. The last mode of objectification, subjectification, is the process

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dominance (1977, 192-197).

[4] There is a large literature on this point. For example see Anderson (1983), Anthias and Yuval-Davis (1989), Balibar and Wallerstein (1991), and Gilroy (1987).

[5] See Paul Rabinow's "Introduction" to Foucault (1984).

through which the subject is interpellated in subjectivity but is also a process of self-formation. In *Discipline and Punish* (1979), Foucault argues that power relations are constructed through a series of methods, disciplines and technologies that are embodied in the subject. Genealogically these devices are at first forces of domination that are external to the subject. Eventually such devices are embodied within the subject and self-practiced. Subjectivity is then a set of knowledge embedded in the relations of power. The state creates this sense of politics through the disciplining of the human body and the control of population through bio-power. In this sense governmentality is government rationality focused on the methods, techniques, and practices of exercising power (Foucault. 1991). Subjectivity understood through governmentality is about the art of exercising power over subjects conceived of as populations. In this construction there is an important link between the concept of human beings as subjects and populations. To be an individual is to be part of a group through the embodied practices of power relations that discipline both subjects and populations.

This relationship allows for a critique of the state through its own methods of wielding power. Foucault, also in *Discipline and Punish* (1979), importantly wrote about the concept of illegalities. In this under-read section he describes an example of how systems of delinquency are exploited and offers an analysis of the production of illegality:

> *Delinquency, controlled illegality, is an agent for the illegality of the dominant groups*. The setting up of prostitution networks in the nineteenth century is characteristic in this respect: police checks and checks on prostitutes' health, their regular stay in prison, the large-scale organization of…brothels, the strict hierarchy that was maintained in the prostitution milieu, its control by delinquent-informers, all this made it possible to canalize and to recover by a whole series of intermediaries the

> enormous profits from a sexual pleasure that an ever-more insistent everyday moralization condemned to semi-clandestinity and naturally made expensive; in setting up a price for pleasure, in creating a profit from repressed sexuality and in collection of this profit, the delinquent milieu was in complicity with a self-interested puritanism: an illicit fiscal agent operating over illegal practices. Arms trafficking, the illegal sale of alcohol in prohibition countries, or more recently drug trafficking show a similar functioning of this 'useful delinquency': *the existence of a legal prohibition creates around it a field of illegal practices, which one manages to supervise, while extracting form it an illicit profit from elements, themselves illegal, but rendered manipulable by their organization in delinquency. This organization is an instrument for administering and exploiting illegalities*. (Foucault 1979, 279-280, emphasis added).

This 'useful delinquency' is an industry that is regulated by a system of checks and manipulations. It is an industry, not in the formal sense, but can be understood as such. To Foucault's list of illegal practices can be added the trafficking of labor migrants. Human trafficking as an aspect of labor migration has become one of the largest commodities of import and export in the world. The illegality of labor flows is an industry that is regulated by the state and exploited in the production of capital. It is a controlled illegality that is reflected in the illegal practices and informal regulations of governments. Immigration controls are a convenient way for the nation-state to controll and manipulate the labor of migrants.[6] As Foucault in his elegant simplicity continues, the organization of delinquency "is also an instrument for the illegality with which the very exercise of power surrounds itself" (1970, 280). For the state, power is extended through the use of illegality. Hence, the techniques of power are politically constructed through illegalities.

[6] This is significantly the work of the nation-state as opposed to the state, in that the nation is configured by the state through the illegalization of migrants.

This legal production of migrant illegality is a flexible construct of the state. The politics of this production are shaped by the social and cultural debates that surround the discourse of immigration. Il/legality in turn molds the immigrant experience and the modalities of work and labor. As a form of subjectivity mediated by the nation-state, illegality is the other of citizenship. For both concepts, access to social and economic rights are based in modes of subjectivity and identification without any guarantees. In other words, social identity as it is constructed through the state and its citizenry, selectively offers access to these rights. Indeed, the challenge to struggles for justice that vie against these assumptions is to articulate rights in ways that match global political economies rather than ones that are modeled on the nation-state.

The construction of documentation and modes of il/legality is based in capitalist modes of production and its relationship to the state. As Partha Chatterjee argues in terms of the role of the interventionist state:

> The dominance of capital does not emanate from its hegemonic sway over 'civil society'. On the contrary, it is its measure of control over the new state apparatus which becomes a precondition for further capitalist development. It is by means of an interventionist state, directly entering the domain of production as a mobilizer and manager of investible resources, that the foundations are laid for the expansion of capital. (1986, 49)

The state relies on economic capital, and thus must manage its movement.[7] Capital growth is manipulated by the state apparatus into the realm of the nation and civil society. But labor is also affected by this management. Indeed, the idea of formal, protected, and organized labor via trade unions and government regulation is viewed as a tangible part of the nation. Whereas casual, temporary, unorganized labor is seen outside of this fold,

[7] This kind of financial control is the aim of structural adjustment policies as well.

most often as transnational and illicit. The rhetoric of documentation and il/legality also influences how these two zones of formal and informal work are understood. For the state they are two poles that are to be manipulated in the further expansion of capital through the tactics and strategies of legal-juridical discourses. The end of such a relationship is the creation of a specific subjectivity. What is important here are the specific ways subjectivities are constructed through notions of labor through alienation and illegality, the legal production of illegality, and the formation of the nation through state practices.

As a project of reconstructing this history there are multiple layers of alienation. There is the Marxist social and economic relationship of labor to labor power, but there is also the work of constructing subjectivities through racial and national ideas of belonging. Here illegality is a form of alienation that is a hidden aspect in the history of capitalism. This is an important aspect of resurrecting the invisible components of particular experiences of modernity and capitalism described in the potential of subaltern histories of capitalism by Gyan Prakash:

> to think of the incompleteness and failures of capitalist modernity… requires that we reinscribe the binary form in which capitalism's partial success is portrayed, [and] that we render visible processes and forms that its oppositional logic can appropriate only violently and incompletely. Of course, historians cannot recover what was suppressed, but they can critically confront the effects of that silencing, capitalism's foundational status, by writing histories of irretrievable subject-positions, by sketching the traces of figures that come to us only as disfiguration…not to restore the 'original' figures, but to find the limit of foundations in shadows that the disfigurations themselves outline. (Prakash 1992, 14)

The state does indeed suppress these histories that operate in the shadows of alienated subjectivities. This experience is crafted and produced through the state apparatus, but also in social relations. The legal codes that produce a subject is formulated through

citizenship and the nation. Such subjectivities as they are produced though power entails a set of behaviors, modes of being, embodied practices and a knowledge of a set of social and cultural capital. To understand the legal construction of migrant illegality this essay examines state bureaucracies and the legal-juridical discourse of the state that are key sites of negotiating these subjectivities. In addition I examine narratives of labor migrants who must navigate these networks in order to obtain the necessary cultural capital to obtain economic capital.

Pakistan and the Ethnography of the State

Ayesha Jalal's important history of Pakistan's state formation is a genealogy of the shift from a colonial state to the initial years as a postcolonial state (1990). This transformation was less of a revolutionary change then it was a scramble for political consolidation and the centralization of state power. This strategy, much like most newly created nation-states, was an economic one. With a dismal budget and the constant threat of bankruptcy in its first few years of existence, the Pakistani state needed to develop tactics to rapidly accrue money. The development apparatus of the state quickly begin to rely on its military and defense spending partly to allay fears of war with its neighbor India, but also to bolster a newly formed Pakistani nationalism. In its earliest phases the Pakistani state came to rely on a deficit budget and accrued debts to donor nations. Jalal's narrative, as useful as it is, leaves much unsaid about the practices of state power on its population. The insight of her historical work is that it provides a comprehensive view of the debates

between formal political parties and their struggle for power in the formative phases of Pakistan's state formation.

Complementing Jalal's political history is the structural history of the state found in the work of Hamza Alavi. Specifically, Alavi's arguments have shed light on the structural place of class in the state formations of South Asia. This analysis emphasizes social change and the impact of colonialism in the interaction of state and class interests in postcolonial societies that are part of the peripheral capitalist economies (Alavi 1972, 1983, 1989). In the case of Pakistan, Alavi argues that the military-bureaucratic oligarchic state and its alignments with the interests of propertied exploiting classes creates a relatively autonomous state apparatus. This character of the postcolonial state is not the instrument of a single ruling class as thought of in traditional Marxist state theory, but is a state that

> is relatively autonomous and it mediates the competing interests of the three propertied classes—the metropolitan bourgeoisies, the indigenous bourgeoisie, and the landed classes—while at the same time acting on behalf of all of them in order to preserve the social order in which their interests are embedded, namely, the institution of private property and the capitalist mode as the dominant mode of production (Alavi 1973, 148).

The emergence of new urban classes in postcolonial societies arrives through the industrialization process began in the colonial period.[8] The colonial system of industrial relations established a pattern that allowed for a great degree of state intervention that continued under the postcolonial state (Alavi 1989, 16). The state in this postcolonial condition takes on an increasingly economic character, because of its control of multinational investment and its role in mediating the interests of the propertied classes.

[8] See Weiss (1991) for a cultural history of the Pakistani working class in Punjab.

This is so "because the state in the postcolonial society directly appropriates a very large part of the economic surplus and deploys it in bureaucratically directed economic activity in the name of promoting economic development" (Alavi 1973, 148). Through a system of laws and rules the Pakistani state was able to control and regulate formal labor. Because of a reliance on multinational capital, not through direct investment but through tied credits and loans regulated by the state and its stake in development projects, Pakistan, in what Alavi calls the overdeveloped state (1973), has left itself open to market fluctuation and high unemployment. Hence large numbers of the work force were indirectly under the control of the state whether in the informal sector or unemployed. This urban working class is itself in large part surplus-labor displaced from rural agriculture. It is also the primary force of the transnational working class that differs from its transnational professional counterpart.[9]

The state of Pakistan as an overdeveloped state then seeks to maintain social order and hierarchy through the hyperbolic extension of its power. This is an inheritance of colonialism in which

> the "superstructure" in the colony is therefore "overdeveloped" in relation to the "structure" in the colony, for its basis lies in the metropolitan structure itself, from which it is later separated at the time of independence. The colonial state is therefore equipped with a powerful bureaucratic-military apparatus and with governmental mechanisms that enable it, through routine operations, to subordinate the native social classes. The postcolonial society inherits that overdeveloped state apparatus and its institutionalized practices through which the operations of the indigenous social classes are regulated and controlled. (Alavi 1973, 147)

The overdeveloped state as a set of institutional practices to exert power overlaps with Foucault's concept of governmentality. But what makes it overdeveloped is the idea that

[9] For an analysis of the political economy of transnational labor migration in the 1980s see Rashid (1983).

this is an excessive use of power to maintain control and regulate the economic interests of the state. For Alavi this explains the preeminence of authoritarian-military control and its perilous relationship to traditional democratic parties that extends this form of power to the state apparatus. Perhaps, overdeveloped is not the most appropriate descriptor for this use of power because of its connotation of some proper, standard, form of state development. The logical inference is that the properly developed state is the metropolitan state. The over- in overdeveloped then comes from the history of colonialism and the relationship to imperial bourgeoisies. This is surely the correct connotation of overextension of power, but it in no way means that the overdeveloped state is performing its duties to its citizenry in an adequate manner. In either case, the art of governmentality for the state is one that constantly shifts in order to maintain its sense of power. Hence, one may argue that Alavi's argument that the overdevelopment of the state is simply the development of the state and its shifting interests according to Foucault's conception of governmentality. That is, the overdeveloped state is in line with the governementality of the state through the multiple tactics and strategies deployed to maintain state power. This is also a question of historical context and the many ways that the state can develop. This is not to deny the important difference in the mode of autonomy of the state in postcolonial societies and its analytical usefulness in deriving important conclusions in terms of state practices. The historical context of postcolonial societies lends itself to alternative forms of state practices.

But such a reading still relies on the instrumental character of the state to understand its interests. That is to say that government rationality is also one of

appearances. Importantly, this way has to do with the overvaluing of the state in all realms of the public sphere. Here Foucault also weighs in arguing for the need to analyse the functional aspects of governmentality but to also realize that perhaps the state "is no more than a composite reality and a mythcized abstraction" (1991, 103). Certainly the legacy of Althusser's theory of the state has made it seem as a unified entity that is pervasive and inescapable. But there are other places from which subject formation is derived that are silenced by the overbearing voice of the state.

An ethnography of the Pakistani state must start with such an analysis. Namely the bureaucratic structures that shape the state apparatus, the practices of the state, and the legal-juridical discourse that the state apparatus is beholden to. Class formation, as one important form of social formation in the context of Pakistan, entails regulation by the state apparatus through the law to control its population, in a broader sense the nation. Such power is manifest in the micropolitics of everyday practice and exchange where the state mediates, in this example, the flow of labor migration. How forms of knowledge are acquired and then converted into social and cultural capital is important to seeking economic capital. This is a process of navigation but also one that is importantly shaped by the practices and discourses of the state.

Ambivalent States

The Pakistani state, like most, is elusive. As a cab-driver in Pakistan's sterile, modern, capital Islamabad once told me: "What is the government, the government is everywhere.

It is behind you and you don't see it. It does nothing but lie and cheat." Conversations about the state and politics are pervasive in Pakistan. In a society where political stability is so uncertain, it is hard to go without a day obsessively arguing and thinking about it. The business of the state is everyday. The 'government,' as the state is most commonly referred to, is an abstract entity that is critically observed and cautiously approached.

The appearance of the state apparatus as a functioning, controlling, and rational structure that is efficient and effective is part of its mythology. For many in the bureaucracy of the Pakistani state and those outside of it in the non-governmental sector, emphasis is placed on the ability of the state to act in terms of good governance. That is that the state has a vested interest in the welfare of its citizenry and must engage in practices that promote stability and growth. This a policy-oriented tactic that asks the state to act in good faith. Actual outcomes and practices of state power are another issue.

For the issue of labor migration, the state of Pakistan has a vested interest in regulating this industry. Foremost in the perspective of the state, is the solution transnational labor migration provides for domestic problems of underemployment and unemployment. Labor migration is also responsible for the creation of an independent private industry that manages this migration through labor contracts. As a sending country the state is interested in regulating the flow of remittances from such labor because of the growth that it signals in government statistics, but also because this is a source of income for the state through fees collected in money transfers as an indirect contributor to the national gross domestic product (GDP). Workers' remittances since 1980 have been a large part of the GDP in Pakistan ranging from 8.9% in 1980 to a

gradual decline in 1993 to 3.3%. The economic importance of these remittances is also reflected in their percentage of merchandise exports that was an astounding 97.2% in 1985 and dropped to 23.7% in 1993.[10] Labor migration has indeed been of prominent importance to the state.

The reliability of these figures must also be brought into question. In the 1980s there was a peak interest in labor migration that was also mirrored in scholarship promoted by the Pakistani state. As numbers began to decline, so did research funding. The state depended on its regulatory apparatus to manage labor migration and left the numbers to the unreliable collection of the state bureaucracy.[11] In my first meeting with the Director of the Bureau of Emigration in Islamabad the ambivalence of statistics became obvious. As I sat in his office, and before I could introduce myself, I witnessed a conversation with one of his researchers in which they discussed recent emigration numbers that were printed in a Pakistani national newspaper *Dawn*. The numbers that the newspaper had printed were different from the ones they had. Because these numbers were taken from another source they changed the state numbers reasoning that there must have been a typo along the way. Such incidences are not uncommon. It is a regular affair to see contradictory statistics in different newspapers and then a correction shortly thereafter through clarification from a state agency. Such is the numbers game in the

[10] These figures are taken from the Asian Development Bank in 1996 in Bagchi (1999).
[11] For example, researchers in state agencies are often cautious about their statistics because of various external loopholes. The most obvious being that the state figures rely on labor migrants who actually go through the state system for a work visa. Currently there is no reliable way of telling how many migrants leave Pakistan on tourist visas for work abroad. The Bureau of Emigration for many years has been working in collaboration with the US government in developing a computerized database to track departures from Pakistani airports. How such a database is to be used is yet to be seen. The same can be said of remittances. For some time the State Bank of Pakistan has had to compete with informal networks

state, where obtaining official numbers for my research was itself an arduous task because no one agency wants responsibility for issuing official numbers. But such numbers do exist although there meaning cannot be taken at face value. At best such figures reflect the states regulation of labor migration, but by no means does it reflect the entirety of the population that is involved in such migration. It is more a measure of how many people the state is able to regulate than how the entire population of labor migrants is regulated through work visas and remittance controls.

The legal regulation of labor migration relies on two aspects. First, it controls the welfare of the migrant in terms of labor contracts and second it controls the flow of labor migration through state regulation that benefits the state (this subject is more thoroughly explored in the Chapter 3). The legal code of Pakistan that regulates migration dates back to the British colonial era in the late 19th century. The 1837 Indian Emigration Act was established in its initial framing to guard the rights of labor migrants. By 1922 the tide had turned and the colonial state was pressured to control the flows of unskilled migrants. This was the height of the era of South Asian indentured servitude that was sent throughout the British commonwealth (Tinker 1977).[12] Much in the way that Paul Gilroy (1993) has argued that slavery was integral to the drive of capitalism and American modernity, the same can be said of this labor diaspora that maintained the economic growth through the imperialism of the British. By the time of independence and the

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of money transfer known as hundi that until recently was the most popular and cost-efficient form of sending remittances to Pakistan.

[12] Takaki (1989) has also made this argument for Asian indentured laborers and migrants who filled in the gaps after the end of slavery in the US. This American capitalism established its imperialism without the obvious extraction of the colonial model. This relationship persists, and explains in one way why it is the dominant model.

partition of the Indian subcontinent this legal code remained intact. Both India and Pakistan shared this same civil code subsequently providing independent amendments. In 1979 this Act was renamed the National Manpower Act in Pakistan and was updated to fit the current logistics of labor migration. Subsequent to this the Act was modified with minor amendments to ease labor migration as it coincided with the boom in the 1980s.[13] The two main agencies that operate under the Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Overseas Pakistanis are the Bureau of Emigration and the Overseas Pakistani Foundation. The latter agency created in 1979 has the agenda of providing for the welfare of overseas Pakistanis and offering various incentives for investment in Pakistan.

What is remarkable about the history of this labor code are the protections mandated to the labor migrant. Many of these were initiated by the British with the idea of facilitating this form of work and labor. For example, for early indentured laborers the issue of the labor contract was standardized by the colonial state to offset complaints of mistreatment by contractors and recruitment agents. The legal code then institutionalized certain terms under the supervision of the state. This ranged from the conditions of transport to the terms in which contracts become null and void. These protections have been modified in the current form of the Emigration Act but the protective spirit remains. However, these statutes are rarely referred to, and are often a last resort to state mediation of labor problems. Reference to labor migrant rights only arises in the case of specific complaints, and more expressly when the state deems the case of reasonable significance.

[13] Zafar (1997) is a collection of this legal code in its current form.

The ambivalence of the state is articulated at many levels. On the one hand it wishes to promote labor migration in its own interests, on the other it is aware that it is dependent on the economies of other countries that are willing to absorb Pakistan's surplus labor and may not recognize specific rights for migrant laborers. This was the position of many of the state bureaucrats I interviewed. There ambivalence stemmed from an understanding that their role in the state apparatus was primarily as a caretaker. The Director of the Lahore Protectorate of the Bureau of Emigration put it this way:

> Our job is to make sure everything goes smoothly. Our people [Pakistanis] that leave from here are happy with their jobs and their contracts are satisfactory. But in the end there are many things that we cannot control especially in the host country. There it is the job of our missions to represent what we have tried to do here.[14]

This realist approach reflects the general ambivalence of bureaucrats in terms of their position in the state. It is a feeling that expresses the limitations of the state in the daily lives of migrants. Sending countries are often beholden to the terms imposed by host countries. And in many cases the state must be forced to enter into disputes between labor and management, especially considering the complexity of sovereignty issues with labor migrants. Labor migrant to the Gulf are technically under the protection of the Pakistani government and as such the Pakistani state is responsible for intervening on their behalf.

Further, there is a tacit awareness of the status of labor migrants through cultural concepts of class and the discourse of illegality. An official of the Lahore Branch of the Overseas Pakistanis Foundation expressed the reality of labor migration:

> Many of our Pakistanis get jobs in places like the Gulf, Hong Kong, Indonesia and then they wait until something else turns up. They even go to places like Sri Lanka until they can find a job or a flight somewhere else. Most of them become illegal but

[14] Interview with Sarwar Nasim conducted April 16, 2001.

> they are just trying to get jobs and make money. Mostly with this idea that they must go to the US.

Destinations within this labor diaspora mark pathways of interstate circulation and the process of step migration from one original location to a final destination. Illegality is then an assumed condition of this migration. That is working-class migrants are at one time or another falling out of legal status. Legality is then an obstacle to working and making money and the pursuit of greater access to resources and capital. He continued:

> For us [Pakistanis who are in Pakistan] there are many bad aspects to this. Because we cannot provide for our own people here they go to other places to find jobs. The problem with this is that Pakistanis are everywhere and they make us look bad. They drive taxis, they work construction, whatever they can find. A lot of our engineers are waiters. I went to the US once to visit my brother in Miami. I loved it there. But I new that everybody was looking at me suspiciously. Not because they were afraid of me but because they might be thinking that I wasn't supposed to be there. That's what happens and we have to pay for it.[15]

Such sentiments are not uncommon. They express a class distinction in terms of sociality and the discourse of illegality and the sense of a fading national pride. Because of the inadequacy of the state, working-class migrants seek life opportunities in transnational settings risking deportation because of illegal status. In this example, middle class anxiety surrounding issues of legal status is filtered through transnational racial concepts that ascribe legality to nationality. Subjectivity here is interpellated in terms of illegality whether one is actually under such a conditionality. Further, class is an inference between middle class Pakistanis and transnational working-class Pakistanis. The possible illegality of the one affects the construction of the legal other. Much of the public debate is expressed in these terms in various newspaper articles on the Pakistani diaspora. Expressions of the loss of the professional classes to brain drain oscillates with the

potential hope such classes can return to their homeland, while the working classes are often viewed as illegal and giving a bad name to the Pakistani national.[16]

For transnational migrants, finding their way through the state system is an arduous task. Through the various offices of the state, simple matters of the migration process become complex negotiations. Much of this requires long hours of waiting and more than likely visitations to multiple offices for a single issue. As I waited for interviews with various state bureaucrats I became familiar with this experience. At one office I encountered a migrant worker who told me of his stressful visits to state offices. On this occasion he was seeking back pay from his employer and needed a state official to review his request. He had already been to two other offices and spoken to the directors of those offices. As he explained to me, each office sent him to another location. "None of these people know what they are doing," he explained to me. This was common experience for him as he continued "everything in Pakistan is exhausting." After he met with the director and he was yet again sent to another office, he reacted harshly to one of the junior officers. His rage was finally quelled when the officer realized what he was asking for and sent him to the proper official. An hour later as I was still waiting for my meeting, he came back and spoke to me again. This time he joked about the absurdity of the state concluding by offering to expedite my wait for the meeting with the same official. The state is also here ambivalent. Rather than a caretaker of the welfare of its citizens, its role is to manage situations. Because of this hesitant relationship, citizens who must rely on the state come to view it with distrust. Not only because of the

[15] Interview conducted April 25, 2001.

bureaucratic inability to perform with efficiency, but because of a deeper ideological distrust of the aims and interests of the state. The state is barer of legal-juridical discourse is seen as unreliable and hence an illegitimate body of control.

Legality in terms of outmigration is most expressly the concern of the state in policing human trafficking. The Federal Investigative Agency (FIA) branch of Passport Control oversees cases and reports of fake agents and documents. They are in charge of controlling illegal migration from Pakistan and investigating the sources of forged documents. Their agenda is to expose exploitative systems of smuggling, even though it is generally migrant laborers who are put in jail. A large part of their policing is of documents rather than the labor migrants themselves. Again this ambivalence is expressed in terms of an inadequate system by the state's enforcement agents:

> These are mostly poor people who need money so they are willing to do anything. My job is to make sure that they aren't being taken advantage of. We know how bad they end up in debt to agents for fake passports and work visas, so we have to stop this. But I don't blame someone for wanting to have a better life.[17]

Enforcement is a separate reality from labor migration. The production of false documents is the concern of this agency. Yet the FIA is reputedly often part of scandals that involve smuggling and human trafficking. Reports in the press have appeared often particularly with the work of the anti-corruption outfit of the Government of Pakistan called NAB, or the National Accountability Bureau. Former FIA agents admitted in interviews that such corruption within the agency is widespread and referred to it as a fairly normal part of daily operations.[18] This corruption and complicity in the illegality of

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[16] See for example a special issue on Pakistani migration reported in *Newsline*, November 2000.
[17] Interview conducted with Deputy Director Syed Javid Hussain Shah May 12, 2001.
[18] Interview conducted April 21, 2001.

human smuggling is where the power of the state and its boundaries are blurred. Returning to Foucault on illegalities, this blurring of boundaries is how the state functions in regulating its fields of power. The state operates legally by surrounding itself in a field of illegality while benefiting and making use of it.

In an illuminating article Akhil Gupta (1995), he argues that the discourses of corruption constitutes how the state is imagined by social groups:

> The discourse of corruption is central to our understanding of the relationship between the state and social groups precisely because it plays this dual role of enabling people to construct the state symbolically and to define themselves as citizens. For it is through such representations, and through the public practices of various government agencies, that the state comes to be marked and delineated for other organizations and institutions in social life. The state itself and whatever is construed to stand apart from it—community, polity, society, civil society…political society—are all culturally constructed in specific ideological fields…The discourse of corruption here functions as a diagnostic of the state (Gupta 1995, 389).

This identification of the state's role in subject formation is also a statement about its exertion of power. There is a connection of the liminality and the opaqueness of state corruption and human trafficking. These are processes produced through an unchecked state capitalism that is itself ambivalent about its citizens. This is apparent in the lack of direct critique of the state from within by its own agencies and bureaucrats. State efficiency has become such a rigid concept that officials are admonished to not criticize the functioning of their agencies.[19]

Ethnographic Encounters with Illegality

The ur-text of the complexity of South Asian modernity and its relationship to colonialism is the passage in Lord Thomas Macauley's Minute of 1835 that reads:

> We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect. To that class we may leave it to refine the vernacular dialects of the country, to enrich those dialects with terms of science borrowed from the Western nomenclature, and to render them by degrees fit for conveying knowledge to the great mass of the population. (Young 1979, 359)

Historians and postcolonial scholars cite this passage with the thoughts of middle class formation and the creation of professional elites. Macauley indeed characterized the creation of a middle class that is characteristic of the ideal in economic modernity and capitalism. This passage also signals the moment of complex hybridity and European interpellation. How does one characterize a modernity that is simultaneously British and Indian? The complex colonial dynamic between race and culture that Macauley articulates says something of the outlook of this alternative modernity. For the British, articulating a colonial modernity meant creating an indigenous bourgeoisie that was to be aligned in interests in the postocolonial era with other transnational elites. This meant the expansion of capital with the economic and political interests of creating a global English educated class that would articulate nationalism within the boundaries of the nation-state and maintain the interests of elites in the power structure. This educated class however is not constrained by the nation-state. As a professional class that shares the interests of the ruling elites of the state, it has high mobility and is able to span the globe in the absence of opportunities at home (Alavi 1991, Viswesaran 1997). What has also been created

[19] I was made aware of an explanation for the lack of candid talk the higher up I went in the bureaucratic chain by an official who mentioned a memo to all agency heads to not criticize the workings of their agencies. When I told him that this meant that he couldn't do his job he replied "we do what we are told."

from this colonial experience is a global working class that is transnational in its character. Failing adequate resources in postcolonial countries, this labor diaspora is able to mediate interstate systems in search for a work and a livelihood.

The paths of such migrations are multiple in the case of Pakistani labor diasporas largely focusing on East Asia, the Middle East, Europe and North America. Labor migration to the Gulf regions have mainly been motivated by the increase of petrodollars and economic growth that has facilitated the transition to a service economy. For many of the Gulf countries South Asian labor migration is a convenient labor supply for economic development. In the absence of local surplus labor, cheap labor is brought in from abroad. Since the 1980s the regulation of this labor migration has become increasingly stringent. To ensure labor migrants from overstaying the Gulf countries have made citizenship near impossible to obtain, and have also maintained a strictly worker migration prohibiting families to migrate. With such strict control migrant communities in Gulf countries are constructed as primarily illegal communities. Migrations to northern countries such as the United States and the UK have been limited by state selection of professional classes. This has predominantly meant that for those who do not fit these qualifications family reunification and overstaying legal status are the few options.[20]

Many labor migrants have a confidence of the jobs they will find and the ease with which this is done. I met Adil in Lahore at a contracting agency. He came from a village outside of Gujarat in the Punjab province. This area is infamous for having entire

[20] See Cornelius et al. (1994) for an overall view of global migrations. Asian Americanists have also taken on the legal history of Asian inclusion in US citizenship and its framing through rights (eg, Ancheta 1998, Hing 1993). See also Moore (1995) for an analysis of legal history as it relates to Muslims in the US.

villages cleared of males in their late teens to late forties. It is also known for having an upsurge in new homes being built that remain vacant for most of the year until its residents return from abroad. Adil had not finished the equivalent of the sixth grade. He was in his early twenties and told me of how many in his family went to various places in the Gulf including the UAE, Qatar and Saudi Arabia. One of his uncles went from Kuwait to the United States in the late 1980s. There he said he runs several convenience stores. He told me how many of the boys that he knew from his village stopped going to school because they new they could find jobs abroad. He had never been abroad and was excited at the prospect of driving a taxi in Abu Dhabi, a job his contractor found for him. He told me no one in his family had ever used forged documents or used an agent that would take you where you wanted to for a price. In this example, the reliance on labor migration has replaced the reliance on the state for the welfare of its citizens from education to employment opportunities. And although Adil claimed to engage in legitimate forms of migration., the acute awareness of legal and illegal means of migration is apparent. Il/legality is engrained within the discourse of labor migration.[21]

In another industrial city of the Punjab, Gujranwala, I met with a group of young teenagers who had a similar attitude. Several of them were related cousins, and their friends. As we talked they expressed the similarity of their expectations of going abroad. They all came from fairly well off families but did not want to stay in Pakistan, nor did they want to study. One of their uncles had some documents made for them to go to the United States. He had to bribe some officers in Karachi but then was caught in Dubai

[21] Interview June 15, 2001.

before he could make it to the US. Even after being sent back he said he would try again. When I asked why they would risk being caught they unanimously said that it was not important, it was just a matter of money. What mattered was getting abroad, at any cost. For these youth the options locally were not important. Their ideal was to go abroad and experience the fantasy of what is to be found in the United States, Europe or even certain countries in the Gulf. Their masculine bravado of undertaking the migration system was also mirrored in their expectations of going abroad. In Pakistan, one explained, they felt stifled. But in the US there were opportunities and freedoms that they couldn't imagine.[22]

In these examples illegality is a perspective to be understood under the confines of the nation-state. It is a category of risk from which labor migrants seek their own sense of agency to operate within a state system that they see as imminently corrupt. These youth articulated their desires to go abroad in terms of how difficult it was to make a living in Pakistan. Part of this difficulty lay in a system that benefited corruption and nepotism. For them to escape this situation, forged documents are but one part of the game within this system. For them this is a system based in materialism—one marked by commodities and the ability to demonstrate wealth through material things. Here the alienation of illegality is not about a kind of social exclusion it is also about the lack of resources to accumulate capital in the form of material commodities such as a house, a car, nice clothes, and the accessories that accentuate status in a class based society. This is the lifestyle that they aspire too and could not understand why anyone else would not want this. Commodity fetishism in the consumer-based economies requires buying

[22] Interview conducted January 3, 2001.

power. Without this migration becomes the only viable option to acquire desirable goods in the global marketplace.

Social Life of Migration

For many labor migrants the navigation of the state system of migration controls is part of the process that allows them to continue their pursuit of capital. The boundaries here between legal and illegal activity depend on the interest of the migrant and the perspective of the state. As I have argued the state operates through a field of illegal practices from which it wields its power. This relationship then in many ways blurs the controls and boundaries of such control. State ambivalence to labor migration is a reflection of this relationship in which the economic rationale for labor migration makes sense, yet the means of this movement are arbitrarily controlled. This confusion of the state is recognized by labor migrants in testimonials of the similarities between legal and illegal activity. One might argue that such a relationship is the result of a lack of regulation, yet theories of the state point us into the direction of the masking of states practices and power. The myth of regulation and power is part of the states manifestation of its control. Part of the illusion of illegality of contractors and brokers is its ability to mimic the state through forgeries and false documentation. The power of the public state then is replicated in the actions of private contractors.

Several outstanding questions emerge from this ethnography of the state and migration. What happens when the state depends on migration? Through the states

reliance on migration for capital accumulation, new subjectivities are formed through this experience of migration capitalism. But what is the responsibility of the state to transnational migrants? And with the growth in this trend of outsourcing labor needs to transnational migrants, how is the legal status of these workers maintained in the international arena? What are the concepts of international or global citizenship? The rights of transnational labor migrants are generally under the auspices of the laws from their home countries. But this does not suffice in the face of dwindling rights in the international sphere and the difficulty with which such rights are actualized. The need of international law to confer the status of global citizenship rights upon transnational labor migrants is a step in the direction of undoing the duplicity of the current system of migration that forces migrants into categories of legality and illegality.

Chapter 5: Some Fundamental Fears: Muslims, Moral Panic and Racism

Introduction

"Sand nigger," I'm called,
and the name fits: I am
the light-skinned nigger
with black eyes and the look
difficult to figure – a look
of indifference, a look to kill….

From *Curriculum Vitae* by Lawrence Joseph, University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988.

This chapter explores the role of moral panics in creating fear and anxiety of Muslims in the post-September 11, 2001, context. The construction of transnational labor migrants as religious and racial subjects in the US public sphere locates Muslims within the particular history of the US racial formation. Terror, fear, panic, and peril are the rhetorical terms that organize religious subjects as racial subjects. Here the US state processes of racialization are constituted in popular discourses of transnational Muslims. In this case diasporas are overlapped in meaning and time in which working-class migrants are collapsed with the illegal activities of terrorism. The state in its relationship to migrants with histories of multiple migrations becomes a target of fear and panic. The homogeneity of racial discourses then comprehends the Muslim subject as a threat with the potentiality of terror. Thus this chapter argues that the US state relies on racial discourses in the construction of moral panics of terror and Islam in its agenda of controlling fear that frames the Muslim subject in terms of immigration and illegality.

In the midst of examples of racial profiling, the illegalization and criminalization of Muslims, is a logic and history of a group considered to be a threat. Moral panics as a symptom of social control is also an expression of manufactured fear. This anxiety over assumed threats is the result of racist common sense that couples racial profiling with racial violence. This index is based on a historical lineage and encounter between Western modernity and Islam. Modernity, though is a convenient ruse for the workings of Western racism. But what are its trajectories, how does racism emerge against the Muslim, and how is this different from other racisms?

The racial violence that followed September 11 was evidence of a moral panic afflicting the US population. This tense time of uncertainty resulted in tragic violent assaults upon Arab, Muslim and South Asian communities across the US. Muslims were not the sole target in these racial attacks, indeed the racial profiling of those who appeared to be Muslims included members of other faiths including Sikhs, Hindus and Christians. It also included a wide variety of national and ethnic groups such as Latinos and others with brown skin and other "Muslim-like" features. These moments of racial violence and subsequent moments of terror threats was as much a moral panic over terrorism and the racial figure of the Muslim as it was the emergence of a newly configured peril.

Terror: Theirs and Ours

On December 29, 2002 the Federal Bureau of Investigation released an alert in collaboration with the Homeland Security Agencies that identified five individuals thought to have entered the United States illegally and of a potential terrorist threat. Immediately news sources distributed this information nationwide as a terror alert and warning of potential terrorism designed to disrupt the New Year's holiday. The pictures of the men along with their names and possible date of birth were copied from the original FBI press release and prominently displayed in the electronic and print media. The *New York Times* reported the ambiguous information of this story as such: "an administration official said it was unclear if the men were simply illegal immigrants or if they were involved in something connected to terrorist activities." Further the FBI warned "that the names and birth dates may be false…one law enforcement official said some authorities believed the men may have entered the country from Canada." The unreliability and ambiguity of this information did not prevent the article from assuming that this was a terrorist plot. The causality between the status of these suspects as possible illegals and/or terrorist and an impending terrorist plot was not brought in question. Instead the article continued with the precautionary measures taken as a result of this threat. The article ended with: "In New York City, the police increased their counterterrorist efforts as a result of the warning…The names of the five men listed in the alert have been sent to all police department commands." The ambiguity of the information provided by intelligence agencies itself relies on a system of assumptions and stereotypes in the name of precautionary measures. Further in the caption describing the

pictures and names[1] of the five men, the FBI report states that the men were of Middle Eastern descent and entered the United States illegally around Christmas.[2] This release was significant in that it focused on the illegality of these migrants and the possible, but at the time unknown, connection to terrorism. This information, although ambiguous in its information, was enough for the US media to spread this alert of a possible terrorist attack, creating a heightened alert that resembled more of a panic.

By January 2, 2003, four days later and after nothing happened, the national panic over the terror alert slightly subsided. The *New York Times* ran a follow-up piece expanding its research on the case. It turned out that this was a case of mistaken identity, or more likely stolen identity. One of the five terror suspects, the individual identified as Mustafa Khan Owasi, was in fact a jeweler living in Lahore, Pakistan, by the name of Muhammad Ashgar. In this report, Mr. Ashgar claimed he had never stepped foot in the United States, but had attempted to travel to Britain two months prior on forged documents. He was stopped at the airport in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, where his false documents were detected and was immediately deported back to Pakistan. This article ended by stating that

> FBI agents investigating falsified identity papers are expanding their dragnet for a growing list of foreign-born men they believe may have entered the United States illegally form Canada. Officials caution they have no specific evidence the men are involved in any terrorism plot, but said they may have connections to a fake-ID and smuggling ring that involves people with terrorist connections.[3]

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[1] The names of the five suspects were as follows: Abid Naraiz Ali, Iftikhar Khozmai Ali, Mustafa Khan Owasi, Adil Pervez, and Akbar Jamal. These names are important in that they were thought by the FBI to be Middle Eastern names. Here the naming of these individuals was also a practice of racializing them and such names as threats.

[2] Neil A. Lewis, "FBI Issues Alert for 5 Illegal Immigrants Uncovered in Terrorist Investigation" *New York Times*, December 30, 2002.

[3] "Pakistani Says FBI Mug Shot is a Case of Stolen Identity", *New York Times*, January 2, 2003.

In this statement the earlier ambiguity of the FBI had now drawn a closer connection to those involved in illegal activity that was yet still connected to terrorist activity. These were clearly claims with no evidentiary linkages, but only possibilities and assumptions. The earlier misinformation that these were Middle Eastern men was replaced with the fact that the picture of Mustafa Khan Owasi was in reality Muhammad Ashgar from Pakistan. The disarticulation of nationality in this example articulated in terms of race, religion and fear, is one of the elements of how panics solidify concepts of race. National origin does not matter as much as the social construction of race. Muslims as a single group are here understood oddly enough as one distinct racial group embodied in the religious practice of Islam. This goes against the logic of the US racial formation that generally assigns race according to phenotypic characteristics. Here broad definitions of phenotype is directly combined with the cultural practices of religion. This logic homogenizes Islam with the Middle East and terror through a politics of fear. In this example the Middle East as a region where Muslims live, and hence whether the suspects were actually from Pakistan, generally considered in South Asia, is of less significance from the perspective of the US intelligence services. The logic is simply if they are Muslim there is a greater potential for terrorist activity. And if they are Muslim, in appearance and with Muslim sounding names, they must be from the Middle East. The final statement by the *Times* confirms this by connecting immigration with terror in the logic of illegality as a uniform set of practices and networks. Connecting human trafficking and smuggling to terrorism doubles the threat. These suspects represent the

potential of terrorist violence at most and the manipulation of systems of migration at least. Anti-terrorism is then intimately linked with anti-immigration.

Almost a week later the Pakistani press began to report the absurd details of this case, incidentally, that were sparsely reported in the *New York Times*. In an article on January 8, 2003 *The News* reported that the FBI had apparently been provided fabricated evidence from a smuggler named Michael John Hamdani who was arrested in Canada on October 31, 2002, under human smuggling charges. His racket brought people from Pakistan to the United States via Canada and Britain. Hamdani, a Pakistan-born Canadian, voluntarily submitted himself for extradition to the United States where he named the five men the FBI originally thought might pose a terrorist threat. Muhammad Ashgar also stated that it was possible that his picture and false identification may have been used by another smuggler.[4] Then on January 12, 2003, another article appeared in *The News* that was based on an extensive interview with Muhammad Ashgar. This article began by contradicting one of the statements reported earlier. It stated that Mr. Ashgar reported he went to Abu Dhabi and was caught by authorities with forged documents on his way to Europe rather than Dubai. This is perhaps a small matter since the entire affair was one of misinformation. But the details are important in this case. Particularly the way in which facts were manufactured and how the characterization of events creates a sense of fear and terror in the US national psyche. And although both Abu Dhabi and Dubai are both in the UAE, it is an important distinction to make. This relates to the earlier conflation: the Middle East and Pakistan, Dubai and Abu Dhabi. Mr. Ashgar in thinking

[4] "FBI Admits Tip on Illegal Immigrants in Terror Probe was False", *The News*, January 8, 2003.

through the reliability of the media realized his own need to address this fiasco. He states *The News* interview: "initially, I tried to dismiss it as a mistake our newspapers make daily but when I went home in the evening, every television channel was broadcasting the photograph with ominous warnings by American authorities…I was horrified."[5] The issue of credibility is important here in the sense of the representation of facts. Indeed we must ask what the effect of these images are whether false or real. For people like Muhammad Ashgar this system of legal control of migration and its implications to terrorism wreaks havoc on their lives. This process of moral panic casts the terms of how immigrants and terrorists are understood.

The mistakes of the FBI were compounded by the panic that was surrounded by this assumed threat. How the media handled this initial FBI warning had much to do with the panic that ensued. What underlies this series of reports is the unspoken story of labor migration and illegality. These are diasporas of folks seeking a better life and willing to engage in illegal activity for greater life-chances. The map here is of Pakistanis going to the Middle East on their way to Britain or Canada with the hope of making it to the United States. The illegality of this migration is now compounded and controlled through the mechanisms of state control that work not only to physically bar such movement, but to create an ideological terrain in which such migration of certain groups of people, namely Muslims, is tied to larger threats and the potential of terrorist activity.

This incident is symptomatic of the national panic that took place in the United States. September 11, 2001, changed peoples lives in phenomenal ways, one of the most

[5] Muhammad Badar Alam, "Fallible Bureau of Investigation," *The News*, January 12, 2003.

stark is the re-ordering of the US racial formation. In this moment the category of the Muslim emerged as a distinct category of race. Arabs from Saudi Arabia and Yemen were all of the sudden linked to people from Pakistan and Afghanistan. These same people were tied to Filipinos and Indonesians. And all of them centrally linked to Palestinians. In the 2002 New Year's terrorist threat fiasco the connection of terrorism to illegal migration reveals some of the new logic on race. To begin with, terror must be associated with illegal activity, terrorism is itself illegal. Illegal immigrants because of their ties to the underworld of forged documents and smuggling might also be connected with the underworld of terrorist activity. The possibility of terror is the new language of preemption and social control. And it should not be discounted that the main informant of the FBI, Michael Hamdani, was a human smuggler himself. The reliability given to the information he provided by the FBI is astonishing. This affirms the practice of any threat is taken seriously and the construction of this logic at the ideological level.

This narrative though is becoming increasingly familiar. The place that Muslims as a category are filling in the US racial formation is historically associated with the discourse on immigration, fundamentalism and terrorism. What is further, the racial discourse of Muslims in the US is increasingly becoming transnational. In a mapping of the terror threats facing the United States and Europe the *New York Times* charted what it called a "Terror Diaspora" that made these connections. This map detailed 'A World of Cells and Plots' by Al Qaeda operatives that targeted American and European interests in recent attempts of terrorism. The map of this diaspora surmised that

> it is a frustratingly uncertain business, hunting terrorism. The impulse is to want to connect the dots, so that a recognizable picture of the enemy will emerge. But the

> very nature of the quarry—secretive, multi-headed, loosely structured and passionate about staying so—keeps the picture blurry and incomplete.[6]

The impulse to connect the dots when they are not there clearly influenced the judgment of intelligence agencies. This kind of rationalism is informed by a racist logic that will defy causal links, and for that matter guilt or innocence, to find the 'enemy.' Granted there are such connections to actually existing terrorist plots, this sketching of the War on Terror is also a fear and anxiety of Muslims at large. Such actions of intelligence gathering by officials are linked to the production of moral panic in the larger populous. As much as this is a crisis of security, of national boundaries and of protection of the citizenry by the state, it is also a crisis of certainty. Explaining the actions of a terrorist is not as important as stopping them.

This language of diaspora connecting Islam and terror was in use early by op-ed writers such as Thomas Friedman of the *Times* who panders to assimilationist and culturalist arguments to explain terrorism and its appeal to Muslim immigrants. Rather than explore how racism has historically operated in collusion with power to dominate Muslim communities and societies, Friedman prefers to argue that Muslim diasporas must change their culture.[7] This is no doubt the culture of terror as a trait of Muslim societies, that for Friedman explains all the violence in the Muslim world. This cultural racism operates to place blame on Muslims through a frozen idea of culture without an understanding of how power operates. As it homogenizes the problems of Muslims throughout the world it arbitrarily places blame on an abstraction called the culture of terror. Terror, as Eqbal Ahmad has noted, is a much messier business (2001). This is

[6] "Terror Diaspora," *New York Times*, March 3, 2002.

particularly true when the state is included in definitions of terrorism alongside some hard analysis of how terrorism is produced.

What is remarkable about the language of such arguments is that they fail to see their connection to the botched racial profiling and moral panic associated with the mistaken FBI report discussed above. These recent constructions of Muslims as a racial group comes from a historical genealogy that comprehends Islam as the antithesis of Western modernity. Further, Islam is perceived as a threat to modernity, democracy and the freedoms that they bring. These are not new ideas, but are in fact representative of the historic confrontation of the Islamic world and the Western world. Both in Europe and the United States this construction of a new racism has led to the rise of moral panics that places Islam as an enemy and a threat. Moral panics in this instance serve to consolidate fear with racial conceptions of criminality in an altered form then first theorized by the Birmingham Cultural Studies group. Here, criminality shifts from petty crime to terror and crimes against humanity. This thinking fits into the streams of anti-immigrant sentiment that have fed racist backlashes on both sides of the Atlantic.

The Muslim and Moral Panic

The recent characterization of Muslims in these events displays some of the themes and representations central to the logic of contemporary racism. Illegality, terror, homogenization of Muslims, Islam, etc., all figure in the ways in which Muslims are a

[7] As an example see Thomas Friedman "The 2 Domes of Belgium," *New York Times*, January 27, 2002.

racial composite. This is eminently about how culture translates into race to manage and configure fear, risk and the possibility of terror. This logic has a long history in the modern Euro-American conception of Islam and more recently in the geopolitical relationship to the Middle East and Muslim countries. The archaeology of the racial discourse of the figure of the Muslim and the terrorist have also been expressed most recently in moral panics that have swept the United States and Europe since September 11.

It is worthwhile to rethink the chronology of the concept of moral panic to understand how it affects the current manifestation of racism and its application to Muslim communities. As far back as the 1960s in Britain social scientists were discussing the concept of moral panics as they emerge in modern history. In 1972 Stanley Cohen described moral panics in terms of fears and anxieties surrounding youth culture:

> Societies appear to be subject, every now and then, to periods of moral panic. A condition, episode, person or group of persons emerges to become defined as a threat to societal values and interests; its nature is presented in a stylised and stereotypical fashion by the mass media; the moral barricades are manned by editors, bishops, politicians and other right-thinking people; socially accredited experts pronounce their diagnoses and solutions; ways of coping are evolved or (more often) resorted to; the condition then disappears, submerges or deteriorates and becomes more visible. Sometimes the panic is passed over and forgotten, but at other times it has more serious and long-term repercussions and it might produce changes in legal and social policy or even in the way in which the societies conceive themselves. (Cohen 1972, 9)

The panics Cohen refers to involve a mixture of legal and illegal activities that include drug use, student militancy, political demonstrations, hooliganism and crime of all sorts. More recently the concept of moral panic has been used in the British press to describe the effects of pedophilia, sex scandals in the Church, sex work and, of course,

immigration. Moral panics involve a process whereby social anxieties and fears become organized in a fashion that becomes known as rational and logical, in other words it becomes in the Gramscian view common sense. This explanation is more than the displacement of fear and anxiety on to groups of people as is commonly argued when discussing moral panics. As I argue, moral panics embody the very rationality that becomes the explanation of events, much in the way that Cohen describes in his work. Hence, false terror threats and the moral panics surrounding Muslims emerge out of a climate with an indeterminate future and the possibility of terrorism. This explanation permits certain actions of the state in terms of social control in place of civil liberties and human rights. Social anxieties that use a racist logic than are permissible for more effective social control. Popular consent is thus achieved through the function of these moral panics, as in the example of the New Year's 2002 terror suspects discussed above, to delineate a simplistic picture of security and terror at least in the public eye. In other words, even if the FBI is responsible for false threats, at least they are doing their job in the interest of the security of the nation. To do the job of protecting the nation from terrorism there must be a set of assumptions from which rational discourse operates. For this kind of state intelligence whether the assumptions are logical is not in question, but rather the point is whether they offer social control and social consent to the means of the state.

In the late 1970s sociologist Stuart Hall and his colleagues at the Birmingham Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies began thinking of how racial explanations were implicated in the concept of moral panics to explain the racist backlash sweeping

Britain (Hall 1978). This work was important in grasping the resurgence of some of these lurking racisms.[8] In their analysis they argued that moral panics arise under conditions of economic and political crisis. This analysis integrated Marxist approaches to law, crime and the state that unfolded in historical documents, newspaper reports and state documents. In the context of a multi-racial England, race is a central component of national discourses. This was a time in which 'mugging' and petty crime were racially coded. Blackness was specifically associated with crime through a popular logic that portrayed black youth as dangerous and volatile. Such a proclivity towards crime was explained in terms of the proclivity in black immigrant culture to express hostility to British nationalism, the expression of British culture. In short, blacks represented a new kind of problem. For Hall and his colleagues the critical task was to demonstrate that the rise of this new racism came in the context of a new economic order that was failing dismally. High unemployment and disparaging working classes led to divisions that began to see immigrants as a threat to prosperity, when once they were the hope. This economic crisis and the moral panics of black criminality necessitated state intervention through police action and the creation of an ideological superstructure to justify authoritarian measures.

Paul Gilroy's essay on 'Police and Thieves' in *The Empire Strikes Back* (CCCS, 1982) collection charted the states response to illegality and criminality and the racial construction of blackness. Central to the configuration of black criminality is the concept of a law and order society. This is to say that in moments of crisis the upholding of the

[8] Stuart Hall also wrote a landmark essay on the role of the concept of race to Gramscian theory (1986) that

rule of law is the means of legitimizing the practices of the state apparatus through the arm of the police. Here in the ideological terrain of racist common sense, ideas of race are mobilized in moral panics as a result of a direct or indirect perceived threat. The rule of law, as it pertains to this anxiety, is then of selective enforcement upon particular racial groups that are assigned this level of threat. The entire edifice of the law relies on the universality of its subjects, yet racial difference has the effect of assigning various relationships of these subjects to state power. This is achieved through the ideological work of racist common sense. In Gilroy's examples the visual imagery of panic combines criminality, illegality and blackness[9]:

> the cavalcade of lawless images – stowaways, drifters, pimps and drug dealers…extends into the present in the forms of muggers, illegal immigrants, black extremists and criminal Rastafarians (dreads). The black folk-devil has acquired greater power with each subsequent permutation. (Gilroy 1982, 145)

The black folk-devil is a mythical category of universality in which criminality and illegality is applied to all black bodies. The sense of power Gilroy refers to is of these images to wield fear and anxiety. This power over society provides the consent of its subjects for the state to remove such fears.

Further, the state is implicated in the manufacture of these images of folk-devils. As the threat of social instability overwhelms society, this gives rise to the rationalization of new forms of state control. This is a process of political and ideological struggle in which law and order societies use criminality as a popular signifier to invoke consent to state power. This governmentality then justifies racial oppression as a legal means of

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is relevant to this analysis.

social control. This logic clears the way for blaming migrant communities for their conditions and for creating mythical migrant figures as dangerous. The state justifies its violent means by arguing that migrant communities are inherently hostile. The source of this antagonism, the state explains, is from migrant culture that must adjust (eg. Enoch Powell's racist ideas of assimilation) to national culture. In manufacturing consent to these means, the threat of black criminality as a folk-devil is the ideological construction of violent actions of the state. This is a progression of thought that not only controls criminality in the form of common crime, but polices popular protest and uprisings along a continuum that argues a fluidity in cultural terms. Again hostility to the state is the tautological sign that explains black criminality and illegality. Thus, dangerous classes are to be controlled through increasingly preemptive methods of police and state tactics that are then embedded in juridico-legal discourses. Hence the anxiety over black communities in Britain led to a series of Immigration Acts in the 1960s through to the present in Britain. These laws specifically controlled certain migrant groups, that is blacks instead of European migrants. Thus, the British state is able to regulate blacks legally and politically as part of the nation through the logic of race and the anxiety created over certain communities. This is the formation of the state as a racial state, in which the reproduction of citizen-subjects depends on the concepts of nation and nationalism as they are challenged by the inclusion or exclusion of new racial groups (Goldberg 2001).

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[9] At the time, blackness in the UK was the predominant political identification of people of color. In this essay Gilroy talks of Afro-Caribbean as criminals and Asians as illegal immigrants. Both are racialized pictures of criminality that are reconstituted in moments of crisis.

These concept are an important prelude to Gilroy's thinking in his essay "Lesser Breeds Without the Law" (1987). Here he furthers his thinking on black criminality through the cultural concepts of work. The process of state formation is itself a modality of moral regulation through the law of the nation (citizen-subjects) and property. Further, under the economic system of capitalism, the state intervenes in order to maintain the mode of production and the efficiency of labor. Crisis of the state is managed through the law, cultural difference and their combined effects in the public. Capitalism of course creates class and gender differences but to this must be added the other categories of race and ethnicity. These differences are seen as expressions of culture that evoke a certain set of practices. The legal effect of moral panics is to maintain law and order against illegality and criminality. The challenge of race to nation, then, is that it threatens relationships to structures of power and the capitalist modes of production. It is this relationship that is masked by the invocation of black criminality and illegality. Indeed, as Gilroy argues in an earlier section of this book:

> Racial structuration is thus imposed by capital. But it is compounded and deepened by the state institutions and agencies that seek to regulate the ebb and flow of black labour in capital's interests. Thus, the role and position of migrant labour in late capitalism as well as the political and legal contradictions around citizenship and settlement in Britain have been important objects of concern to this tendency. (1987, 21)

The importance of this argument is that it identifies racial difference in much the same way as the Marxist understanding of class difference. One is not the effect of the other, but a complicated interchange. Race then as a threat to the order of the state and society in which the reproduction of the nation is maintained through hierarchies imposed on the subjects of the racial state. Hence, an important ideological device of the racial state is to

justify its violent means to create this order through the creation of folk-devils and the manipulation of moral panics.

The working of moral panics are manifest in the US state treatment of Muslims in the post-September 11 era. The moral panic over terror that has been placed on Muslim American communities stems from changes in the state apparatus and the legal-juridico framework. The creation of a Department of Homeland Security and the restructuring of the former Immigration and Naturalization Service are indications of the changes in state power and control. The threat of terror has translated into greater state control over its citizenry in the US. But this comes primarily through the policing of migrant communities. Much like the case in Britain and black criminality, the threat of terror is thought to exist in certain migrant communities. Hence, the focus on Muslim communities and the attention paid to them in the media. But this is also a regressive form of surveillance and policing that is rationalized through the threat of terrorism. Thus, the folk-devil of the Muslim and the moral panic over terrorism is the justification and rationalization of state violence in such communities. Further, the refusal to create legal mandates that control racial violence and hate crimes attests to the greater concern of the state in controlling communities of color rather than preventing and controlling racism.[10] The US Patriot Act[11] is a clear legal example of this type of state control and infringement on the civil liberties of communities of color. It is not an isolated control, however, and must be understood specifically in the cumulative set of legal controls of

[10] For an excellent analysis of the racial violence that followed September 11th see Muneer Ahmad (2002).
[11] It is ironic to note that Viet D. Dinh the Assistant Attorney General, a Vietnamese refugee to the US, was a major architect of the US Patriot Act that imposes draconian measures on migrants.

immigrant groups after the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act, and even earlier as far back as struggles for emancipation by enslaved African descendents on to immigrant struggles for legal rights.[12] The parallel of Japanese internment in the US during the Second World War is but one of the examples of how the state has policed migrant communities of color. Indeed these tactics of intelligence gathering, surveillance and policing of migrant communities by the state have a long history.[13]

Perils in the US

In the early part of the twentieth century the terms Near, Middle and Far East became strategic classifications of important geographic regions. It spanned the area from Turkey to India to Japan, with Europe understood as the center. This was a way of dividing up an area that had already been the subject of much fascination – the Orient. A mythic land in which the colonial imagination began to construct images and representations of diverse and heterogeneous groups of people. In Edward Said's ground-breaking study *Orientalism* (1978), he established a framework which many scholars have since further developed as a mode of analysis and critique of knowledge production. In it Said argues primarily in terms of French and British Orientalisms in the Muslim world, what is for

[12] The key shift in US immigration law in the later half of the 20th century came in the period from 1952 to 1965. In 1952, in the context of a red scare and the Korean War, the McCarran-Walter Act set the precedent for some of the stringent controls on immigration in terms of nationality. These controls are linked to the logic and broad scope of the Patriot Act. The 1965 Immigration and Nationality Act shifted the logic of national quotas to employment quotas. The reality of these legal statutes is that immigration is more often a politically determined mix of nationality and employment preference.

the most part considered the Near and Middle East. One of Said's central arguments is that the Orient and the East becomes a homogenized whole through the discursive practices and processes of colonial scholarship and forms of knowledge production. For all its differences, the Orient, it was assumed could be understood and categorized in relation to European civilization. The civilizing mission of imperial Europe was to colonize the Orient and create it in its image.

As Lisa Lowe reminds us in her work on British and French Orientalisms (1991) this was not just a process of homogenization, but a discourse that was constantly dividing and enumerated through scientific and rationalist discourses. Orientalism simultaneously homogenizes as it makes divisions; it represents a discursive formation that organizes race, class, and gender into a historical project. The differences in form of Orientalisms was also apparent in the geographic division of European and American interests. European Orientalisms concentrated much more on the Middle East, India and China, while American contact with the Orient focused on creating influence and ties in East and Southeast Asia. American orientalism, nonetheless constructed representations of this entire region based on its domestic experience of Asian migrations to the US and through the political and economic relations of the US with Asia. Importantly, these different strands of European and American Orientalisms articulate with one another to form a similar position in relation to Asia and Asians. Orientalism organizes racial difference according to understandings of class, gender and sexuality. The significance of

[13] On the relationship of Asian Americans to the War on Terror see the Leong and Nakanishi (2002). On the infiltration of the US state into South Asian migrant communities for intelligence gathering see Jensen (1988).

this bears upon the range of discourses deployed to construct this difference. In this approach, it is not so much that Orientalism is one homogenous discourse, but is one of the technologies through which discourse is produced.

American orientalism also significantly combined these effects upon the 'Other Asians,' as Kathleen Moore puts it (1995), to construct a world of the Orient of Muslims and Arabs in America (Schueller 1998; Shaban 1991). This is significant to the shape of Asian America, a disciplinary and popular conception that has for the most part taken it for granted that 'Asia' refers to East Asia, and more recently the Pacific Islands, South and Southeast Asia. The world of Muslims and Arabs were combined in this all-encompassing world of the exotic Orient and importantly contributed to the dissent against the legal discourse of American citizenship. As John Tchen argues, American Orientalism importantly combined the geographic regions of China, India and the Arab world as civilizations that had past their glory (1999: xvi). The next great civilization was that of an American nation forged by a manifest destiny that continued westward with the rising sun. This reasoning that moved from Asia to America across the globe connected these two continents in the forging of a modernity based on the work of immigrant labor and people of color. In this way Asia and America became partners in an unequal division of labor.

For Asians arriving in America, Orientalism placed them in unusual categories. The term 'oriental' has commonly come to refer to some of the first Asian immigrants to come to the US – those from China and Japan. In legal, political and popular discourse of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century this also included the misnamed 'Hindoo'

of the Indian subcontinent. Hindoo was a homgenizing category that referred to South Asian immigrants mainly from the province of Punjab. It included those who were predominantly practitioners of the Sikh religion in addition to having sizable Muslim and Hindu populations (Jensen 1988; Takaki 1989). This racial narrative of the Hindoo is also present in the history of the encounter with the 'Mohammedan' as believers in Islam who came primarily from Arab and South Asian lands (Shaban 1991).

Perhaps the greatest solidification of the concept of the 'Oriental' came through wide-spread movements aimed at hostility towards Asian immigrants. Local agitation eventually succeeded in slowing 'Oriental' immigration and from becoming naturalized citizens through state and federal legislation. This organized fear of a 'yellow peril' resulted in the Asian Exclusion Acts of the 1890s and culminated in the 1917 passing of legislation by Congress to bar immigration of anyone from the 'Asiatic Barred Zone.' This zone was itself constructed by Orientalist practices that racialized geographical regions. This law mandated that any immigrant whose ancestry could be *traced* to the Asian continent or Pacific Islands was denied entry as a so-called 'Oriental.'[14] Later this racial geography would extend limited immigration to an area referred to as the 'Asian-Pacific Triangle' in 1952 constituting much of East and South Asia. This was an important policy for the US government in the post-war era to convey its program of racial exclusion and containment.

[14] Asia and the Pacific Islands were specifically cited as India, Siam, Arabia, Indo-China, the Malay Peninsula, Afghanistan, New Guinea, Borneo, Java, Ceylon, Sumatra, Celebes, and parts of Russian Turkestan and Siberia (Immigration Act of 1917, 39 Stat. 874).

The idea of the yellow peril placed Asians within a national and international context. While containing the space of Asians as racialized immigrants, this fear was defined in relation to a notion of white supremacy. This was important domestically in terms of understanding Asians in the white imagination, and also in terms of a geopolitics that pitted the United States in competition with Asia. This construction of perils in US history culminates in the Cold War era with the threat of various domestic menaces. As Robert Lee writes

> Three specters haunted Cold War America in the 1950s: the red menace of communism, the black menace of race mixing, and the white menace of homosexuality. On the international front, the narrative of ethnic assimilation sent a message to the Third World, especially to Asia where the United States was engaged in increasingly fierce struggles with nationalist and communist insurgencies, that the United States was a liberal democratic state where people of color could enjoy equal rights and upward mobility. On the home front, it sent a message to "Negroes and other minorities" that accommodation would be rewarded while militancy would be contained or crushed. (Lee 1999, 146)

With the demise of communism and international competition in the global order, the new menace that has emerged is the Islamic threat. The perils and menaces of the US are now focused on solving this problem both at the national and international level.

This racial construction of the Asian and the Muslim as a problem is not a particularly new occurrence. For some time scholars of race have argued that the modern form of Western racism emerged out of the fifteenth century fear of Islam and Judaism (Frederickson 2002; Miles 1989). This did much to consolidate European ideas of Christian civilization against the peoples of North Africa, the Middle East and India. Race and racism have shifted much since this time, yet the lineage remains an important source of historical reference. As geographies of racism shifted from religion to race,

Europe went from Christian to white, and the so-called 'Mohammedan' from Muslim to brown. With groups of people migrating throughout the modern world racial geographies have broken down only to be recreated in new ways. The shift in this lineage does not deny the meanings attributed to it as a possible rearticulation of racism. Hence in the moral panic surrounding the Islamic threat, the Muslim, the terrorist, brownness, illegality, and criminality, are all understood under one rubric. The US state in preventing terrorism seeks to control Islam and Muslim communities. This has repercussions for people of color in the United States in that this position of controlling Muslims is also about controlling immigrants. Racial profiling to prevent terrorism justifies the racial profiling of all people of color that are seen to pose a threat in the view of the state.[15]

Fear and Fundamentalism

For some time the Muslim, the Middle East and the economics of oil have been collapsed into one symbolic representation. In Edward Said's classic on media representations of Islam in the West, *Covering Islam* (1981), he argues that Muslims have been continually viewed as "oil suppliers, as terrorists, and more recently, as blood thirsty mobs" (6). As rhetorical figures these representation are manifestations of the US state's control of its sovereignty through the War on Terror. Such control does not limit itself to the boundaries of the nation-state but is a means of control that is imperial in nature. Tariq Ali (2002) has argued that the US governments response to the events of 9/11 are more

[15] Leti Volpp (2002) argues that in constructing the terrorist through racial profiling the US state is also

akin to a kind imperial fundamentalism. In the conflict against religious fundamentalism, imperial fundamentalism seeks to 'discipline the world' into the world order of US capitalism (Ali 2002, ix). This allows the US state to justify wars abroad in the name of managing terror, while simultaneously conducting a war on the domestic front. For the US state this has meant the proliferation of new technologies of the state to combat terrorism on home soil through the control of Muslim communities. The moral panics surrounding the example of Muslims as criminals and illegal immigrants who have overstayed their visas and terrorists in the makings is not only of a national scope, but international. The technologies of the US state are exported to other countries allied in the War on Terror. The state control of terrorism as such is now a cross-Atlantic affair that involves governments in Europe and North America, with its effects of combating fundamentalism an increasingly global intervention of the state.[16]

Fundamentalism is a complex entity. Indeed, in the case of Islam, the term Islamic fundamentalism obscures the multiple practices that encompass this religious movement.[17] More appropriately scholars have began to examine Islamic fundamentalism in terms of Islamism. In Bobby Sayyid's *A Fundamental Fear* (1997) he presents the argument for reframing Islamism as a phenomenon of modernity instead of as an opposition to it. Modernity, as he puts it, cannot be escaped. The argument is placed within two figures in the debate over Islam and modernity – the father of Turkish

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complicit with racist hate violence of its citizens.

[16] See Vijay Prashad's essays in *War Against the Planet* (2002) for the complexity of this War on Terrorism and its effects not only in the US but areas such as South Asia where the conflict between Pakistan and India rages through this battle over fundamentalisms.

[17] The term fundamentalism, one can argue, is also another component of a pejorative approach that refuses to comprehend the complexity of religious practice and difference.

modernity and nationalism Kemal Ataturk, and the leader of the Islamic revolution in Iran the Ayatollah Khomeini. Kemalism as the embodiment of modernity and Khomeinism as the epitome of the rejection of modernity places both squarely within the discourse of modernity. And as Sayyid argues, this dialectic is important to understanding Islamic modernity. For modernity is also a recuperative form that simultaneously encapsulates its antithesis. This is not the universal notion of European modernity to be replicated throughout the world, but a modernity disarticulated into many forms. This raises, for Sayyid, the possibility of modernity in the plural. This project allows multiple political readings of both the experience of modernity and of Islam as Aziz Al-Azmeh argues (1993). Sayyid continues, "the Islamists' attack on westernization could be separated from questions about modernity; their rejection of westernization would not simply imply a rejection of modernization" (1997, 98). Thus Islamic societies incorporate the technology of modernity, but differ in relation to its core values. To be sure, there are shared values, but there is importantly a culturally based configuration of how modernity is experienced. For Islamic societies the experience of modernity is multiple and complex.

On the face of it, this argument appears axiomatic. But this is a complex argument for the analysis of fundamentalism and the fear it creates within moral societies. In the case of Islamism, he argues that this contests the notion of one solitary correct version of modernity. This is a challenge to the struggle for pluralism in the notion of modernity. That is to say that the modernity of Islamism is spatially organized against and with Western modernity. Such an argument defies the centrality of many who argue that

secular struggles must uphold the values of modernity. Indeed Western modernity is thought to be in opposition to the discourses of religion, yet encapsulated within them. Islamism is then another reflection of this paradox where religion figures within the discourse of modernity. This plurality of modernity presents Islamism as a challenge to the hegemony of Western modernity. This in itself is perceived as a threat, a danger to the discourses of freedom promised in the assumption of a globally shared humanism of modernity. The conflict between Islam and modernity focuses on this threat creating anxiety and fear rather than the struggle of the pluralist approach of a shared ethical structure.

Sayyid, however, romanticizes this idea of Islamism as modernity that challenges Eurocentrism. Islamism as "one of the centres in the polynuclear world" (Sayyid 1997, 157) is an overdetermined category.[18] Such emphasis on Islamism negates the complexity of Islamic societies and Muslim subjectivities (see Chapter 1). Islamic societies and Muslim subjectivities as part of modernity are perhaps better understood through the polycentrism that Anouar Majid discusses (2000). This is to say that the Islamic world has multiple influences and many centers. To explain this experience one must resort to the use of polyculturalism, or the influence of multiple cultural practices in creating new forms of cultural practice. This decenters Islamism as one form, or one articulation, of postcolonial Islam. This is important in that the fear and anxiety created out of the Islamic threat, of Islamism, is reified onto all Muslims subjects. Hence, Islamism as one manifestation of Muslim subjectivity is the prevailing force of how Muslims are hailed in

the Western public sphere. The threat of decentering the universality of Western modernity amounts to a challenge presented by Islamic modernities. Discourses on terrorism and fundamentalism are manifestations of this social anxiety.

There is also an important technological component to this perceived threat in the logic of the military industrial complex. In creating security for national borders, imperial Wars on Terror by the US government into Afghanistan and Iraq are justified in the name of creating a more civilized world. This maintenance of international order is simultaneously a way of increasing homeland security as it is for an international order. The framework of the national order in the United States is itself threatened by the discourses of multiculturalism and the debates surrounding immigration (see Harris 2002). Technologies of security are a manifestation of these threats enacted through the social force and moral authority of the state. Racisms at home are exported as international racisms and the spread of American empire. These are practices that for example in the political economy of oil maintain an order of authoritarian regimes and practices of racial segregation in Saudi Arabia to suppress Islamist opposition to the homogenizing forces of capital (Mitchell 2002). It is this type of global order that has pitted Islam as an oppositional force not to modernity but to American empire.

Conclusion: Islam in the Public Sphere

[18] Granted that Islamism in Sayyid's project is a watered down version of Islamic fundamentalism and orthodoxy that includes both secular and religious paradigms.

The place of Muslims in the public sphere has become a fraught one. As Nilüfer Göle argues with respect to the place of Islamists in Muslim and European societies:

> The question of a social bond with the stigmatized and excluded is the essential problem of democracy. In the case of Islam in the public sphere, there is a double movement that causes uneasiness: Islamists seek to enter into spaces of modernity, yet they display their distinctiveness. There is a problem of recognition to the extent that Islamists start sharing the same spaces of modernity…yet they fashion a counter-Islamic self. In contrast with being a Muslim, being an Islamist entails a counter-reflexive performance; it involves collectively constructing, assembling, and restaging the symbolic materials to signify difference. The symbols of Muslim habitus are reworked, selectively processed, and staged in public. Performative acts of religious difference in the secular public space defy the limits of recognition and of social bonds and unsettle modern social imaginaries. (2002, 186)

To this idea of performing religious difference must be added the performance of racial difference in Europe and North America. The meanings of this racial difference varies, but September 11 has done much to solidify the representations of this difference. The experience with Muslim communities and Islam of course varies in contemporary times in countries such as Britain and the United States. But the role of moral panics in connecting Muslim communities with terrorism has functioned in similar ways across the Atlantic. Stories explaining the terrorist mind are inevitably narratives of diaspora and migration, that nonetheless should be accounted for, but should also be placed in the complex histories of migrant communities and the problems they face. The performance of religion and race then, to return to Göle, is about enacting a different kind of modernity. For Muslims this is also a cognitive response to the pressures of diaspora. Indeed the result of moral panics is to create a keen sense of identity that whether performed or not is placed on the bodies and minds of Muslims. What is further, in the

Atlantic articulation of Muslims as a racial group, a complex articulation of religion for Muslims more often than not hides the workings of state and popular racism.

Chapter 6:Peace Be Upon You: Religion and Politics in the Umma

Introduction

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "God has created nothing on the face of the earth dearer to Him than emancipation.
Al-Tirmidhi, Hadith 969

I have no country to fight for; my country is the earth, and I am a citizen of the world.
Eugene V. Debs

In this chapter I compare the political utopias of two narratives of Muslim subjectivity, the revivalist Muslim and the secular Muslim, in a contrastive analysis of political imaginaries in Muslim diasporas. As an example of Islamic modernity I argue that these two forms of subjectivity share a similar critique of structures of power in their quest for social justice. Here, I refer to Islamic modernity as a structural framework from which the agency of subject actors is articulated. Both argue their position in opposition to the state in terms of the states ability to meet their needs. By making this argument, both frame their subjectivities and the potentialities of such subjectivities in relation to the state. Based on research conducted in Pakistan I frame this ethnographic exploration in the cultural politics of transmigration and diaspora. Utopia is a guiding force that binds these two viewpoints in the actualization of diasporic consciousness. The complexity of diasporic experiences informs both of these approaches in the practice of diasporic agency and subjectivity. Thus in the relationship of the state to Islamic modernity I provide evidence for the complex alignment of two different forms of subjectivity. As I

argue, these parallel alignments speak to the inability of the state to address the concerns of multiple political articulations emerging from transnational experiences.

Islam, by its historical precedent, is diasporic. Yet the problem for such a project is the definition of its constituency, the *umma* (community of believers), and its claim to specific rights. Diaspora as a concept is riddled with the complexities of its relationship to the nation-state. The issue that joins these concepts of community, diaspora and rights, is recognition, that is the ability to name and engage with specific discursive practices. Both forms of subjectivity, the revivalist and the secular, aspire to a similar set of rights and critique of diasporic experiences.

In this example revivalist Islam in the narratives of the Tabligh-i-Jamaat imagine religious practice as a device to combat evil, the symbol of oppression. In the diaspora the interaction with Euro-American racism calls forth the necessity of virtuous action and the model of the divine. Here religious practice incorporates conversion with the miraculous as a device to understand racist action. The problem of delineating a process of religious faith is not only at issue, but the mobilization of certain concepts to articulate a sustainable political struggle. Within these narratives of Islamic religious belief is an embedded anti-capitalist critique that situates the believer as the subject of political embodiment separate from materialist gain.

Such a narrative is not exclusive to the revivalist, but are part of popular discussions of Islam. Indeed for the working-class labor migrant, Islam and the world, religion and the secular, are complexly interrelated. By examining narratives of labor migration of Pakistanis to the Middle East, I argue that a political struggle of a similar

type is at stake, yet the means for such a struggle is articulated in terms of class struggle and working-class solidarity. The anti-capitalist critique of the Tablghi Jamaat parallels struggles organized around workers rights. Race and class oppression in Gulf countries comes in different form then the example of Western forms of racism, and in the context of different narrative strategies results in alternate forms of action.

Here modernity is put in action in the world of the disenchanted worker. Struggles for justice are enacted though multiple narratives and discourses of liberation and freedom for both the revivalist and the secular Muslim. Through Muslim subjectivities, both Islam as a religion and the secular criticism of politics are interactive modalities of thought and practice.

Islamic Utopia

Outside of Lahore, Pakistan, is a small township called Raiwind that has become well known for its large expanses of land that wealthy Pakistanis have converted into ranches (most famously by ex-Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his family). Raiwind is popularly joked to be an American suburb of Lahore mainly because of the size of homes and the infrastructure that is far more reliable than in the urban setting of metropolis Lahore. Raiwind is also well-known, and perhaps best known, for a large religious compound that is one of the main centers of the Tablighi Jamaat. The compound located in the commercial city center is quite large including madrassas, a eating area, living quarters and cleared areas used for camping for the annual *ijtima* that boasts a yearly gathering of

well over a million attendees. The figures are difficult to measure, but many are fond of saying that this is the second largest gathering after the annual Haj in Saudi Arabia.[1] This group of religious practitioners, although its numbers are largely assembled in Pakistan and the rest of South Asia, is more properly understood as a transnational religious movement. Their popularity in Europe and North America and their influence in transnational migrant communities is a significant to how they are organized in South Asia, particularly in a Muslim country such as Pakistan.[2] The reach of the Tablighi Jamaat in Europe and North America has grown dramatically in the last two decades with their influence in mosques frequented by South Asians widespread. This connection to the diaspora in interesting ways connects migrants to the state and its interests. For example, monetary donations from the diaspora to the Tablighi Jamaat are rarely monitored. Simultaneously the Pakistani state has an interest in the Tablighi Jamaat as the soft face of Islam.

The Tablighi Jamaat is best described as a reformist religious movement founded in India around 1927 by Maulana Muhammad Ilyas. The aim of this movement is the recruitment of Muslims to a return to the right path of Islam and an active role in the community of Muslims. Because proselytizing is prohibited in Islam, Ilyas set out to bring back Muslims to the vision of Islam in the early community of the Prophet. This for many orthodox Muslims is an important period of emulation that provides individuals with a model of bodily comportment and the Islamic community a model of social

[1] The Tablighi Jamaat is often criticized for this mainly because of the sacred nature of Haj and the comparison to the importance of Haj. For Muslims, Haj to Mecca is a compulsory religious practice that must be completed at least once in a lifetime.

interaction. This model of community is the idea of an Islamic utopia that guides Muslims in their earthly existence. Ilyas, in evoking the model of the Prophet and the early Muslim community, sought to engage in a pedagogical model that followed the Prophet's example of virtuous action and thought.

What distinguishes the Tablighi Jamaat from other Islamist movements is its missionary approach and its programmatic discipline of its followers. Tabligh is the act of informing or notifying, and Jamaat refers to a community or group. As a community that must spread the word of Islam, Ilyas envisioned a return to a 'purer' form of Islamic practice and belief. Tablighis enact this return to purity through a series of embodiments and performances that seek to encompass proper Muslimhood. As a pedagogy, this was a style adopted from the Prophet in which the example of proper action is to be followed in intention and bodily comportment by all Muslims. The key modality is that of virtuous belief and action.[3] Tablighis in order to achieve this perform discursive and bodily practices of their own comportment, but must also importantly preach these ideals to other Muslims.[4] Hence, the Tablighi Jamaat envisions a traveling and migrating Islam that transnationally follows Muslim communities that are to be returned to the fold of proper Muslim practice and belief. Indeed it is this practice of preaching and discipline that is part of the structure that establishes the networks of the Tablighi Jamaat. Where ever there are Muslims the Tablighi Jamaat see it as their duty to preach the word of Islam. This approach removes them from the model of the nation-state into a movement

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[2] Metcalf (1996) has written on this influence in America and Europe. See also Masud (2000) and Sikand (2002) on the transnational effects of the Tablighi Jamaat.

[3] Hirschkind (2001) and Mahmood (2001) examine similar movements in Egypt and the emphasis on virtue as a disciplining apparatus of Muslim subjectivity.

of transnational activity. As such the model that Tabligh ascribes to in Islam is a complete world view. It is a way to participate in the world through religious being and a practice of forming a Muslim subjectivity that is always in the process of achieving a greater relationship to *din*, or religion, in a relationship to Allah. Islam in this approach is a practice that is then an incomplete project for a Muslim subjectivity that must always be improved. The goal of such a Muslim subjectivity is to construct a religious worldview separate from the material world while simultaneously within it. In other words, the Tablighi Jamaat offers a critique of capitalism that shuns extravagance and opulence while accepting the realities of the needs to participate in the world of capitalism.

My research on transnational labor migration took me to Raiwind in a roundabout way. I have long been acquainted with practitioners of this movement in the United States, and in many of my interviews with transnational labor migrants in Lahore I discovered that many had been to Raiwind. Because of the loose structure of the Tablighi Jamaat not all of those I talked to considered themselves Tablighis. Indeed many of the transnational migrants joked about the bodily stereotype of Tablighis as wearing an imama (a type of turban), bearded, with pants that are pulled up above the ankles. This however did not detract from the impact it had on their lives. Many saw their trips to Raiwind and their experiences traveling with the Tablighi Jamaat as a form of religious and spiritual renewal. It affirmed their faith while also providing them with a framework of religious action in a world of secular activity. As one labor migrant told me "Islam is everywhere, when you are eating, when you are working, when you are driving, this is all

[4] See Metcalf (1993) for a textual analysis of the beliefs of the Tablighi Jamaat.

Islam." More than the ideological construction of an Islamic world-view, the effect of the Tablighi Jamaat is to offer an understanding of social relationships in the Muslim community and the necessity to interact with other Muslims.

It is important to note that both men's and women's groups are active in the Tablighi Jamaat. The jamaats, or groups, are most often divided by gender and travel and offer dawa on this basis. My encounters with the Tablighi Jamaat were mostly with men. In Rawind the Ladies Ijtima was located in separate quarters. The women's section I was told was identical to the men's accept in size. They also had a set of speakers and sessions for women to listen to similar to the men's section. Another difference is in the role that women played in the family in terms of educating their children and providing a proper Muslim household for their families. As part of this Islamic utopia, gender segregation provides for the different needs of men and women as moral actors within the religiously mandated concept of the nuclear family.

My initial stay in Raiwind consisted of group discussions and lectures provided by the various emirs. The message followed the basic tenets of Islam and a rationality that structured the path of Muslims to righteous thinking and action. Emphasis was placed on spreading the word of Islam and its basic beliefs. Indeed most who I interacted with performed these ideas in a discursive model of repetition. Quotes from the Quran and Hadith were cited verbatim from lectures. In group discussion repetition of these arguments was exemplary in the practice of developing religious reason. In conversation religious references were constantly repeated to make sense of their application to worldly affairs. This pedagogy of tabligh embodies virtue and the structure of rightful

action through discursive reason and rote repetition, a common device used to construct religious subjectivities.

One individual who I went to visit introduced me to several of the attendees who resided abroad. The section for foreigners was unusual in that it was the only area in the compound that was air conditioned.[5] Afzal, originally from Gujranwala, an industrial city in the Punjab province, was now living in Berlin where he ran a gas station. Afzal had a PhD. in chemistry from a Pakistani university. He told me that he planned on leaving Berlin and wanted to go to either London or New York to stay with relatives. Later Afzal introduced me to Ifthikar, a Pakistani Kashmiri from Mirpur, who lived in London and was an accountant. Ifthikar's family left Pakistan in the 1950s and had been brought up in Britain. Both were in their mid thirties, married and had several children. Both initially engaged with me by offering *dawa*, an invitation to Islam and rehearsing many of the arguments presented in the lectures and group discussions. After several hours of discussion about Islam I veered things to their experiences in Europe. They told me of the communities they lived in and the importance of spreading Islam to other Muslims. I asked them what kind of problems they faced in their communities back home. Both commented on the lack of problems and instead spoke of the positive features of the communities they lived in. They asked me about the state of Islam in the United States. They were curious to know about the state of Muslim communities and how they were organizing themselves. Both were keen on finding out more and expressed an interest to

[5] Many of the foreigners also consist of wealthy donors who are touted for their mixture of spiritual belief and discipline. There are parallels of this phenomenon throughout the Muslim world. In Egypt this air-conditioned Islam is compared to a newly emerging neoliberal Islam.

move there. As I spoke I mentioned the racism against Muslims in the US. When I asked them if they had ever encountered racism in Europe, they both replied affirmatively stating that there was much racism all over Europe. Afzal was not worried by this. As he explained to me this kind of hatred did not matter as long as you were able to lead by example. His response to racism was the example that Islam could provide to others:

> One time we went with a Jamaat to Frankfurt. Several of us took a van. As was our practice we would try to pray in every small town that we passed. In one very small town we were in the middle of *salat* [prayer] when a group of skinheads saw us. We were praying on the street at the bottom of a bridge. The skinheads were standing at the top of the bridge and were yelling at us and spitting. But none of us moved. They came down from the bridge and tried to hit our imam [who was leading the prayer]. He fell down but he didn't break his salat. He went back to praying. They looked at him strangely and didn't know what to do. This way we showed them that you don't have to say something to someone to teach them something.

This non-verbal response exemplifies the approach of the Tabligh. Here actions were stronger than the power of hate language and racial violence. The correct response from the perspective of a Tablighi to racism is the belief and practice of Islam. Ithikhar chimed in:

> As you know, we don't believe in racism in Islam. There are many races in Islam. In the Quran it says "O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know each other (not that you may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you." [49:13].[6] This means that we are all different but we are also the same. When you go to Haj you see Muslims from all over the world. This is the glory of Islam.

For both the correct method to combat racism is the acknowledgement of difference and coexistence under the framework of a universal Muslim subject. As they explained to me: Muslims are all equal but in practicing Islam we are not, the solution of which is a return to the basics of Islam, most importantly prayer. Afzal added a coda to the end of his

story. One of the skinheads had apparently been so impressed by the behavior of the imam that he decided to convert to Islam and was now a prominent member of the Muslim community in his town. As he explained, this was happening all over Europe. If a racist skinhead could overcome hatred and prejudice than the correct path of Islam was to teach by example.[7] For Afzal this was also an extension of his dawa to me as a coreligionist. This initial invitation is important to the structure of how one commits to the ideological framework of the Tablighi Jamaats agenda of spreading Islam. At the discursive level this was clearly an example of the miracle of Islam and the invitation to this world of the miraculous. Indeed the achievement of conversion is considered as the greatest praise to the work of Tabligh.

As a metaphor for combating racism and anti-Muslim hatred, this story performed the narrative of virtuous action that structures Tablighi thought. In addition to this it relies on an imaginary of an Islamic utopia that is to be forged in everyday action. It is a kind of religious reason that provides believers with a worldview of interaction. This reason is framed through belief in divine intervention that provides miracles in the obstacles of worldly secular existence. Miracles and the glorious possibilities of Islam are part of a religious discourse that becomes an explanatory system. Throughout my stay in Raiwind I was told many stories that followed this motif of the miraculous. In large part they followed this pattern of worldly interaction with those who were not on the right path of Islam followed by a conclusion of inexplicable, and at times fantastic, action.

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[6] *Quran*, translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali.
[7] Interviews conducted May 9, 2001, Raiwind, Pakistan.

As I waited to be introduced to one of the elders in the Tablighi establishment I spoke to a local Pakistani who had lived in the compound for over 10 years. He began in the familiar way of discussing the importance of living through Islam everyday. He invoked the concept of *din*, generally the idea of religion but also of faith and belief. I asked him about the sectarian differences in Islam and we continued to discuss the problems between the Sunni and Shia community in Pakistan. He quoted Maulana Abdel Wahab one of the emirs of the Tablighi Jamaat who says "there are no divisions in Islam, just one…Shias, Wahhabis, Sunnis are all Muslims, some people say pray this way, some people say pray that way, there is only one prayer and one Islam." This type of unifying logic is part of the appeal of the Tablighi Jamaat and its power to form alliances with other Islamist groups with differing ideologies. As I asked him about the connections of the Tablighi Jamaat to other organizations implicated in violence against Shias and in Kashmir, he responded that there was no justice in such actions. To him the only justice was in peace.

As many scholars and Tablighis state, Tablighi Jamaat is considered a non-political movement (eg. Metcalf 1996; Lewis 1994). This is perhaps true in terms of its position within traditional party politics, but the Tabligh is far from being non-political. It has often formed questionable alliances with religious leaders from militant religious outfits, who are often in attendance during its larger gatherings, and is also the favored religious group of the ruling elite and state bureaucracy. This is perhaps because of the enormous appeal to professional and wealthy Pakistanis nationally and abroad. The Tablighi Jamaat brings in enormous amount of donations from Muslims in the diaspora

as well as wealthy Pakistanis. Such connections should not go without mention especially in a climate of the recent successes of Islamist political parties in the electoral process in Pakistan. Tablighi Jamaat in many ways is a safe alliance for the state because of its unifying approach. These alliances do not however detract from its alliances to militant groups engaged in violence of the sectarian and terrorist kind. As one Tablighi once confessed to me: "this is the state of the Muslim community and we must continue to talk to everyone to show them our way."

As unifying concepts of the political imaginaries of the Tablighi Jamaat, miracles and the belief in the greater Jihad of peace, often referred to in the religious studies literature as quietism, are important devices of faith and spiritual renewal. As devices of political engagement they offer reference points to the possibilities of religious impact in secular, worldly, experience. These are important elements in the diasporic experiences of Muslims in the encounter with the non-Muslim other that perceives Islam as a threat. Within Islam the Tablighi Jamaat offers a source to overcome sectarian differences, albeit from a distinctively Sunni vantage point. This embodiment of religious practice for the practitioners of the Tablighi Jamaat then serves as a political alternative to militant Islam and the heterodoxies of popular Islam based in divisions of national, ethnic and cultural background.

Secular Utopia

In late May 2001 in Dubai, in the United Arab Emirates, some 1000 Indian and Pakistani workers took to the streets to demand back payment of their wages. These all-male workers, and many of their relatives back home in Pakistan and India who rely on their remittances, had not seen their salaries paid for the previous four months. The Bartawi Group, a large Emirates construction company that had over 5000 South Asian workers under contract, illegally withheld payment of wages to its workers because of its own supposed liquidity problems. For three days the workers decided to halt work at the construction site until they were either paid or bused to their respective embassies to complain. These initial talks with the management went nowhere. By Tuesday May 22 the workers took things into their own hands and decided to walk to the Ministry of Labour to make a formal complaint. The workers marched through the modern downtown of wealthy Dubai with its high-rise office buildings and five-star hotels mostly built by South Asian laborers.

The workers took this step at their own risk since in Dubai public demonstrations and strikes are illegal. Certainly these workers chanced losing their jobs, spending time in jail, and deportation. Finally, the management company, embarrassed by all of this, sent buses to transport the workers. Many of the workers were suspicious of where the buses would actually take them so they continued by foot. By the time they reached the ministry they were informed that the company had decided to pay them their wages for the last two months and the rest would be provided by the end of the month.[8]

[8] "Unpaid Construction Workers take Complaints to Ministry," *Gulf News*, May 23, 2001; "Dubai Labourers Protest Over Delay in Salary," *The News*, May 23, 2001; "Company Settles Wages with Protesting Workers," *Gulf News*, May 28, 2001.

I had often heard of such acts of spontaneous solidarity of South Asian workers from my interviews with labor migrants in Pakistan. This was an interesting moment that solidified some ideas of the narratives of transnational working-class consciousness in my ethnography. Such camaraderie for these bachelor societies of all-male workers, is a process of masculinization in patriarchal work spaces. Men as workers are placed within hierarchies of difference that takes for granted gender. Although those from the subcontinent take with them their national and ethnic identities, in the eyes of the Arab management they are racialized as inferior South Asians, and in this case working-class. For the workers the homogenizing effects of race and class structures proved to be in their favor in the face of conflict with their Arab bosses. The awareness of their similar circumstances allowed them to take action in collective solidarity. It also demonstrated how solidarities are formed when South Asians are abroad. In work camps where South Asian workers live while in Gulf countries, communities are organized through ethnic, regional and national boundaries. But there is also much interaction. Through the circumstances of transnational labor migration the boundaries of difference are compiled into the categories of worker and laborer. Many times workers lives are split between work and the camps in which they are forced to live. It is through these experiences that South Asian labor migrants come to know one another. They work together, eat together; and build trust and understanding with each other. Yet the differences of homelands remain. It is only at strategic moments that solidarities are spontaneously formed through prior relationships.

In my interviews I came across countless examples of Pakistanis who after working in the Middle East recount tales of camradarie and friendship with other South Asians. This is a unique experience that involves the structures of patriarchy and the manufacturing of specific masculinities. Here workers discover the uniqueness of other national, ethnic and religious groups and accept them, while also sharing common cultural practices and similar economic conditions. Workers self-identify as caretakers within their families and hence the proper role of masculinity. The acts of collective solidarity are built on this kind of secular utopia based in the right to work and the right to a better life not only for individual workers but for their families. For South Asians who go abroad this is the primary basis of leaving their homelands. Out of this utopia emerges a discourse of freedom that relates to the experience of modernity. For these labor migrants, freedom means making a living wage to support themselves and their families. Work and the compensation of a wage is an aspect that is for working-class Pakistanis a transnational experience. In the absence of employment and upward mobility in Pakistan, workers move outward. Their decisions of where to go and what they will get in return is based on the effects of imagined locations and the work they provide.

In constructing these imaginaries, ideological fantasies are important aspects of thinking through the possibilities and choices of migration and work.[9] The fantasies associated with migration construct migratory destinations through discursive and media technologies. For many migrants word of mouth and personal networks play an important role in constructing these imaginaries. For example, working-class migration to the Gulf

[9] See Hansen (2001) who offers an example of this in India.

for Pakistanis is imagined as both a place to make money and a difficult place to live. For many it is the convenience of proximity. But in the long run many prefer to go elsewhere. There is a consciousness of this that has developed through a history of mass labor migration to the Gulf that began in the 1970s. Many workers assume that the Middle East is the ideal location because they are Muslim countries. But as many Pakistani workers soon realize hierarchies of race and class are in operation. As one labor migrant explained to me:

> We all go there expecting to be embraced as Muslim brothers looking for work. After being mistreated so many times by your [Arab] bosses you realize that being a Muslim means nothing to them. Arabs look down at desis [South Asians] and think we are lazy and dirty.

Another worker explained his Muslim subjectivity differently:

> The best experience I had was when I went to Saudi Arabia to work in construction. You feel at peace doing work there because these are the holy places of Islam. You feel like you are doing something for Muslims…When I was there I worked in several places in Mecca building hotels for people coming for Haj and Umra [pilgrimage to Mecca and Medina].[10]

The difference in these two narratives is social and spatial. For Pakistani Muslims, travel to Gulf countries is mediated through the concept of a shared Muslim *umma*, or community of believers. The reality of social divisions in the example between racial and class hierarchies between Arabs and South Asians, is then displaced by the religious obligation to the holy lands of Islam. Constructing this community is almost literally imagined through the process of labor and work. Here secular and religious narratives combine to differentiate social and spatial boundaries and meanings. The secular activity

[10] Interviews conducted December 13, 2000.

of work then becomes a religious act of duty when it pertains to the organization of religious practice.

On another occasion I spoke to a group of Pakistani Christians who were hoping to find work abroad but had never been. They were eager to find out from me the possibility of going to the US and what the process was. As I explained it to them they visibly became more excited. One told me a story of his cousin who was now in Chicago making more money than he could imagine making in Pakistan. I countered with the difficulty of getting visas to the US and the work that was available. He responded

> This is our nation, our county. How can we leave it? We could go to the Middle East but the wages are much lower than in America. At least in America you make a decent amount of money no matter how they treat you.

Another said he would like to go to the US for a few years and then come back and settle down in Pakistan. He explained he once had the chance to go on political asylum but because he thought he would not be able to return to Pakistan did not go through with it. An important aspect of the desire to migrate to the US is the fantasy of opportunities available and a willingness to persevere hardship to have this access.

The symbol of the United States as a destination is a powerful one, over and above other sites of labor migration such as the Middle East, Europe, Australia, East Asia, etc. This was made apparent by a taxi worker from New York that I spoke to Lahore. He had just come back from New York and was on vacation, as he put it. He spent nine months in the US working and three in Pakistan with his family. He had spent five years in the Middle East and told me he didn't like it. The best decision he made was to go to the US. Driving a cab in New York was hard but he loved it there. He planned on

taking his kids there eventually for a better education. As he explained, it was hard to be away from his family but important for the future of his children.[11] Such experiences are attractive and formative of discourses in migration imaginaries. This is clear in the attention paid to the differential status and position of returnees. Thomas Blom Hansen (2001) discusses this in terms of Indian Muslims and their construction of global horizons that enframe understandings of self and others. For many returnees this is a performance of cultural and social capital, a demonstration of success and achievement. This status and position is structured through a hierarchy of global horizons. The US is undoubtedly at the top of this list not only because of the imagined opportunities but because of its appearance on the global stage of politics. The global might of the US as an imperial political power is understood in terms of its economic power. The lure of this power is the promise of greater life-chances and a lifestyle of upward mobility.

In these examples the secular utopia of the right to work is understood as a freedom that structures the choices of migration. As it frames social action it creates new alliances and solidarities organized around this discourse of freedom and work. These potential solidarities are a practicality of the experience of work and the relationship of workers to structures of power. Inherent in this is a mode of secular criticism of the political world and the analysis of power.

Conclusion: Secularism and Muslims

[11] Interview conducted November 7, 2000.

Secular practices abound in transnational migrations. Such a political separation is not only the provenance of the state, but is an example of analytical thinking and reason. These social practices are created in the worlds of labor migrants to navigate the structures of the state that control and regulate migration. The ideological construction of subjectivity depends upon particular embodied practices and the discursive construction of particular ideas of utopia. For the revivalist Muslim this utopia promised emancipation through proper action and belief. In the example of the secular Muslim as a working-class migrant, ideal situations of utopia are based in social opportunity and work. This idea is widespread among migrant workers and explains a different approach to the politics of justice. In the situations of labor strikes and demonstrations, the ability to form alliances and solidarities across lines of religion, nationality and ethnicity, speaks to a different set of objectives than the example of the revivalist Muslim who seeks the unity of the Muslim community. These differences are also a variation of positionality in which the purposes of one group are vastly separate from the other.

There is, however, an interactive modality of these two utopias. Here the articulations of justice offer the possibility of parallel systems of reason and critical discourse. In this modality there is the important slippage between secular and religious reason that imparts a sense of self. These discourses formulate subjectivities on multiple levels while also formulating critiques of power and structure. This secular critique of the world allows the possibilities of these two kinds of utopia to meet one another through the idea of a shared agenda of social and economic rights. The assumed distance from these two forms of utopia, the revivalist and the secular, is also marked in the use of

religious and secular reason. One does not exist without the other for many of these migrants. Nonetheless they appear as categories that have been attributed legitimizing force and power in different ways.

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Vita

Junaid Akram Rana was born in Nashville, Tennessee on February 8, 1973, to Muhammad Akram and Muzafar Aktar Rana. In 1990 he entered Texas A&M University where he received a Bachelor of Arts degree in December 1994. During the following years he lived in Cairo, Egypt, and traveled in search of a good cup of tea. In September 1996 he entered the Graduate School at The University of Texas at Austin.

Permanent Address: 516 South Iowa, Weslaco, Texas 78596

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